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GUITAR WORLD



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"Open a Pandora's box of evil guitar tools and go crazy!"

RIVERS CUOMO UNLEASHES WEEZER'S '80s HAIR-METAL HOMAGE!

VAN WEEZER

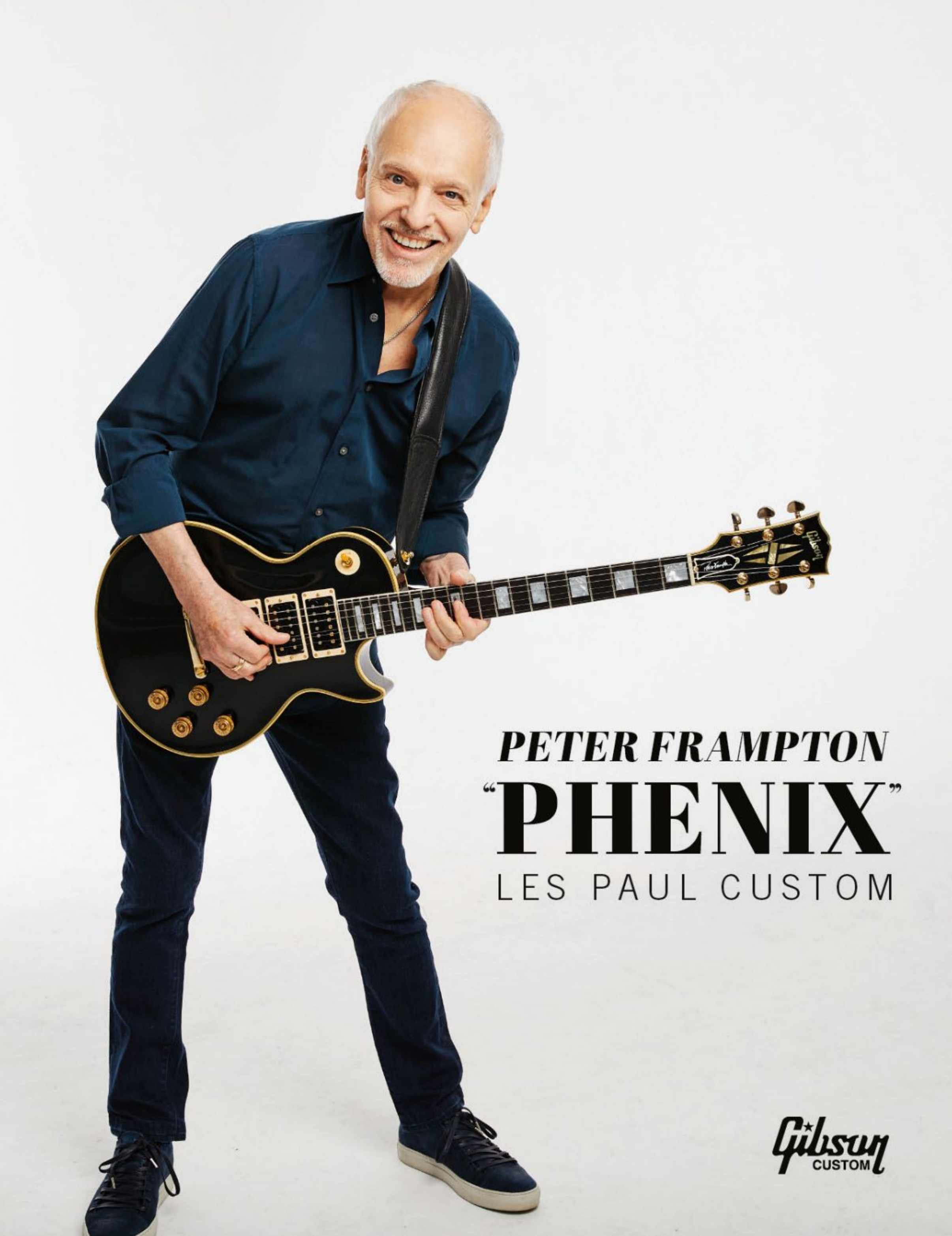
MARC BOLAN
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THE LAST DAYS OF **ALEXI LAIHO**

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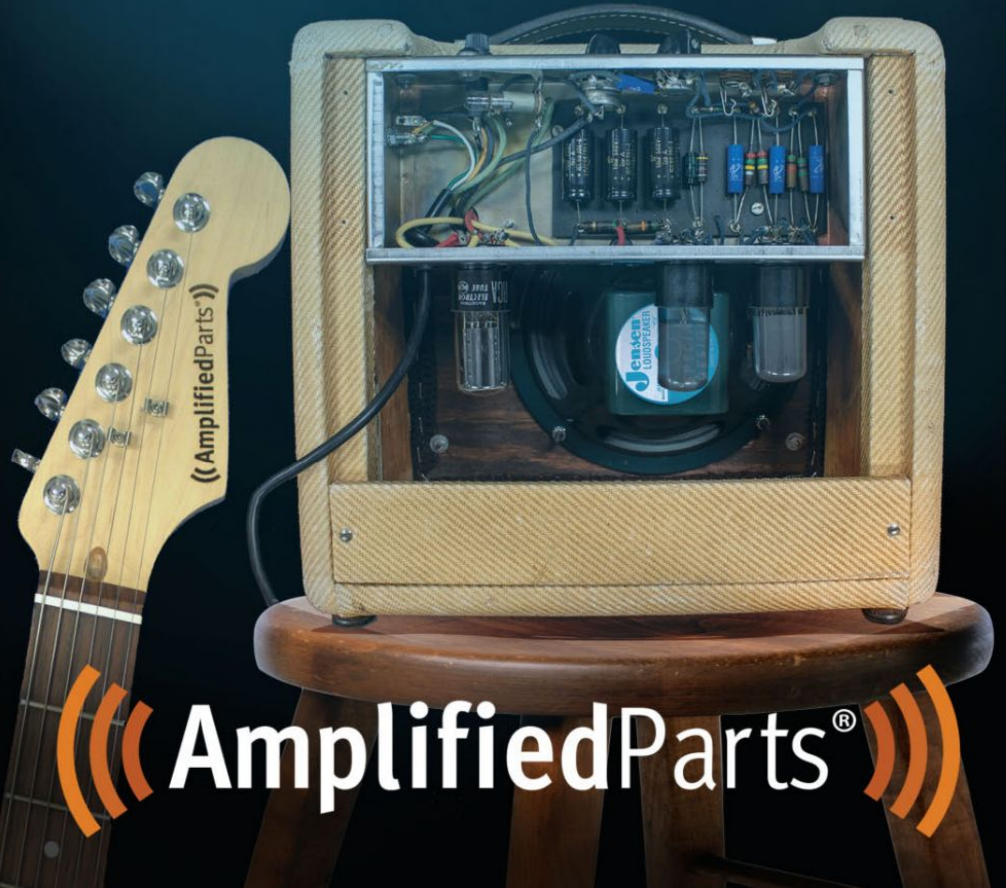



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FEATURING



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Weezer's Rivers Cuomo lets his hair down in Los Angeles, April 2021

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DEPARTMENTS

KEVIN SCANLON

COVER PHOTO: KEVIN SCANLON/KEVINSCANLON.COM

WOODSHED

VOL. 42 | NO. 7 | JULY 2021

VAN GUITAR WORLD!



YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T have guessed it (at least I hope not), but this month's Rivers Cuomo cover shoot represents the first *Guitar World*-assigned photo shoot since the May 2020 issue, when Kevin Scanlon photographed Ozzy Osbourne guitarist/producer Andrew Watt and his nifty stash of gear. What's really cool (and totally random) is the fact that Scanlon also shot our brand-new Weezer pics, thus creating a poetic little bookend to the whole pandemic-inspired photo-shoot-shutdown.



During the height of the lockdown, a bunch of artists turned to setting up their own photo shoots in their own super-controlled environments. A great example of this is our recent (Holiday 2020) Angus Young cover.

But back to Rivers: It's funny that this new post-photo-shoot-shutdown world looks a lot like the old world. We've got Cuomo on the cover — discussing an Eighties-hair-metal-inspired album called *Van Weezer*. As it turns out, the last time Cuomo graced our cover (May 2002, left), he was holding a Kramer 5150, a la Eddie Van Halen, complete with a cigarette sticking out of the headstock (as seen in a classic mid-Eighties Kramer ad featuring Eddie). There's even a tiny Eddie Van Halen just below the G in *Guitar World*! Anyway, long story short, I'm pscyched to be assigning cover shoots again!

DAMIAN FANELLI
Editor-in-Chief

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Moore Lessons, Please!

There's been a lot of great stuff in *Guitar World* over this last year — great interviews, the tribute to Eddie Van Halen, etc., but the Gary Moore lesson in the May 2021 issue knocked it out of the park. These licks and tricks are invaluable to anyone playing guitar, no matter what level they're at or what style they play. Lessons like this — and the Peter Green one from last year — are the reason I stay subscribed. I can't thank you guys enough for these great blues lessons. Thank you!

— Noah Homola



Farewell, Leslie West

I was delighted to see your tribute to Leslie West in the April 2021 issue. I've been a big fan of his playing since Woodstock, even though Mountain didn't appear in the movie (a whole 'nother story). Give me 10 seconds of Leslie playing two notes over the hundreds someone like Yngwie can squeeze into that same period. But, as mentioned in the article, it was on Howard Stern's show where I got to know Leslie as a person. What a character. I remain a huge fan. One aspect of Leslie not fully expounded on in the article is his mentoring young guitarists. Although he wouldn't describe it in those terms, Leslie was indeed an inspiration to up-and-coming musicians. He was the Rodney Dangerfield of guitar, always seeking to jam with anyone and willing to offer advice on how to further their lives and careers. Check out *Unusual Suspects* as an example. He will be sorely missed.

— Bennett Herdeman

Guitar Trek: the Next Generation

Thanks for the feature on Plini [April 2021]. I should probably spend more time on YouTube checking out the next generation, with so many great young players coming up. I grew up on players like Satriani, Gilbert, Vai and Petrucci and I could definitely benefit from being more open to giving some of these kids a listen. There's no genre of guitar-oriented music that's as popular as it might have been in the late Eighties and early Nineties, but we live in the music-production era. I get the impression that a lot of "popular" songs these days never existed outside of a DAW prior to recording and were certainly not demoed before a live audience. I think there's still a place for great guitar in popular music; it just has to find its way back! If artists like Plini have any say in the matter, it will. It's great to see that there's some solid young players ready for that spotlight.

— Bob Messinger

Nito? Neato!

Ichika Nito? Never heard of him, but I listened to "Orb" [transcribed in the April 2021 issue] and liked it quite a lot. Being able to read a transcription of that piece helps me to understand better how he performed it, even if I only manage to learn a few phrases myself. I also enjoyed the Radiohead transcription of "Paranoid Android" and the excerpt from *Nöthin' But a Good Time*.

— Ward Blair



Fan Halen

Longtime *GW* subscriber here, and a longtime buyer before that. In fact, I just renewed for another two years. I and millions of others are deeply saddened by the news of Edward Van Halen's death [in October]. Eddie is my biggest guitar influence and, in my opinion (an opinion I've held since 1990), he's the biggest, most influential guitarist since Jimi Hendrix. He's my all-time favorite guitar player. Over the 41 years of *Guitar World* you have done a superb job in printing informative and insightful Eddie interviews. No other guitar mag has ever covered Eddie and Van Halen as well as you, and for that I say thank you. I'm in hopes that in '21 you might dedicate another cover and an entire issue to Edward and Van Halen. He's absolutely deserving of getting an entire, amazing issue of the great *Guitar World*. I hope you'll give this real consideration. Attached [pictured] is my own personal collection of every Eddie/Van Halen magazine I have that features Eddie or the whole band on the cover. The second photo shows my Van Halen books. To me these particular books are the best ones written on the band. There's also a copy of *Vintage Guitar* because they featured the awesome and amazing Michael Anthony on the cover.

Take note of the second row of my magazines. Second row from the top, the far-right magazine — take a look. Eddie's on the cover and that's the July 1988 issue of *Guitar World*, the first copy of *GW* I ever bought — when I was 15. I bought it at Revco drug store (now it's a CVS) in University Heights, Ohio, in early to mid June, 1988. Enough of my rambling! I hope a full Eddie/Van Halen issue might be in our future. He absolutely deserves it.

— Michael R. Condelli

Thanks for the Blues Heads-Up!

I don't remember the exact issue, but you recently told us about three new blues releases by GA-20, Kid Ramos and Mike Flanigin (with Sue Foley on lead guitar). Thanks for that! I don't want to imply that I live in a bubble (I totally don't), but sometimes it's hard to keep up with new music — and I'm still looking for bands to fill that massive hole left by Stevie Ray Vaughan's death in 1990. I'm not saying any of these players are equal to SRV, but I dig their Jimmie Vaughan vibe and, in the case of GA-20, their tone. Speaking of GA-20, thanks for the story in the Holiday 2020 issue. More Sue Foley and Ana Popovic coverage, please!

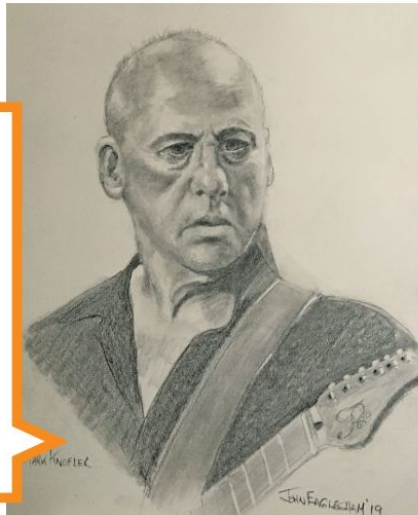
— Doug Kendall Jr.

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READER ART
OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com** with a scan of the image!

Also, please let us know if you'd like us to share it on Instagram!



MARK KNOPFLER BY JOHN EAGLESHAM



"Here's a painting of Buckethead that my mom, Robin Greene, painted. It would make her entire year if her art were to be recognized by the guitar community. Thanks for checking it out!
—Garrett Greene

BUCKETHEAD BY ROBIN GREENE

DEFENDERS *of the Faith*



Mike Callahan

AGE: 47
HOMETOWN: Cookeville, TN
GUITARS: Fender Stratocaster, Fender Strat HSS, Fender Jazzmaster, Yamaha RGX320FZ, Schecter seven-string, Washburn bass and an old Alvarez I keep forgetting I own
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Pat Benetar "Heartbreaker," Judas Priest "Victim of Changes," Van Halen "Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love" and originals
GEAR I WANT MOST: A 50-gallon barrel of Dunlop 1mm nylon picks



Brandon Mah

HOMETOWN: East Gwillimbury, Ontario, Canada
GUITARS: Gibson SG Standard, Gibson SGJ, Jackson Adrian Smith San Dimas, Dean Explorer, Fender CN-140-SCE Acoustic
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Iron Maiden "Flight of Icarus" and "Phantom of the Opera," Ozzy Osbourne "Mr. Crowley," Coheed and Cambria "Welcome Home," Smashing Pumpkins "Rocket" and my own originals
GEAR I WANT MOST: Marshall JCM 800, Yamaha Revstar RS620, Dave Murray Signature Fender Strat



Duke Mattern

AGE: 51
HOMETOWN: Livingston, NJ
GUITARS: Jackson USA Soloist, Jackson San Dimas "Jack Butler" Strat, Jackson Phil Collen Archtop, Charvel Jake E. Lee, Music Man Axis and Gibson LP Custom
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Metallica "Fade to Black," Racer X "Into the Night," Steve Vai "Ladies Night in Buffalo"
GEAR I WANT MOST: Tom Anderson Angel, PRS Tremonti

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**. And pray!



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TUNE-UPS





Myles Kennedy with an all-original Fender "Nocaster"

CHUCK BRUECKMANN

The Ides Have It

MYLES KENNEDY — THE MAN WHO ONCE AUDITIONED FOR LED ZEPPELIN — TALKS US THROUGH THE BLISTERING PENTATONICS AND VINTAGE GEAR HEARD ON HIS SECOND SOLO ALBUM, *THE IDES OF MARCH*

By Amit Sharma

CONSIDERING HIS DUTIES fronting Alter Bridge and Slash's solo band, Myles Kennedy could very well be one of the busiest musicians in rock. Especially when you factor in his solo work, which began with his 2018 debut, *Year of the Tiger*, and continues on this year's *The Ides of March*. Unlike his first album, however — or, indeed, any of his projects over the years — the new record showcases a different side of his guitar playing, proving he's not merely a talented singer and songwriter. Talking to *GW* from his home studio, Kennedy explains how different situations call for different strengths.

The opening track, "Get Along," has some blazing-fast pentatonic runs that are reminiscent of Eric Johnson and Joe Bonamassa.

Eric Johnson is a big one for me, so I've definitely been trying to chase through certain patterns that he kinda invented, and that Joe Bonamassa took to a new level. I figured after all the time I've spent working on that stuff, it would be fun to throw in ideas like that here and there.

There are a couple of moments like on the album where it sounds like groups →

of five using a mixture of economy and alternate picking.
There's definitely some economy going on. Some of that I incorporated from Frank Gambale, who was at the forefront of sweep-picking in the late Eighties. I saw him perform with Chick Corea and remember thinking, "Wow, what is *that*?!" Obviously it sounds way different when you incorporate it into more of these pentatonic five patterns and whatnot. Mark Tremonti and I were talking about Troy Grady's instructional videos the other day, specifically the Eric Johnson one where he looks into some of those double strikes, down or up. What's weird is that I started utilizing that technique but I reversed it… for some reason I find myself going the other way. It's hard to explain, but I know there are definitely two ups and two downs in places.

Although you've played in various bands over the years, it definitely feels like we've never heard this side of you before.
I never really found the right application for a lot of those licks. But this being a more blues-rock record, I felt like sticking to a pentatonic or blues-based approach — especially with the fast runs. It just felt more appropriate. In Alter Bridge, we tend to be quite modal at times, with a lot of triplets… it's just a different approach. I wanted this record to be congruent in terms of the leads. If I was going to have a burn here and there, it would have been inappropriate to kick into some harmonic minor legato run. It just wouldn't fit!

You mainly stick with a Diezel Herbert amp in Alter Bridge. How different is the rig in your solo ventures?
Any time a Diezel was used on this album, it was actually the Schmidt — a discontinued model but a killer amp, like a Vox AC30 on steroids. I used one for my guitar tracks on the second Slash record, *Apocalyptic Love*. But what I used a *lot* of this time, because it suited the sound, was a 1958 Fender Deluxe with the 5A3 circuit, which is the magical circuit. It just has this *thing*. I would say it's the main sound of this album. A lot of the times if we were doubling, we used one of our producer Elvis' amps [Michael "Elvis" Baskette], this '74 Marshall combo he had in his collection. And any time I pulled out my '54 Fender lap steel, we used an Amplified Nation.

What are we hearing in terms of guitars?
A lot of the record was written on and performed with my '52 Fender Blackguard Telecaster. In recent years I've really become obsessed with Blackguards. This one just has *something*. I don't know why — it could be the pickup, which almost sounds like a P90.



"This being a more blues-rock record, I felt like sticking to a pentatonic or blues-based approach — especially with the fast runs. It just felt more appropriate"

There's also a 1958 Gibson ES-335 that has *the* PAFs in it… basically the same ones you'd find in a Burst, for a fraction of the price. For acoustic stuff, I used the same 1945 Martin I used on [debut-album track] "Haunted by Design." It's a great-sounding instrument. But the one that blew Elvis away was a 1965 J-50, which sounded magical. The great thing about those Gibsons is that they're not crazy expensive like some of the old Martins.

We heard you used a Klon at some point too.
Yeah! Though we actually didn't get an original; we got a clone of a Klon and loved it. We used it a fair amount, especially on the leads and in a way that made its presence known. Another I used was the good old Fulltone Full-Drive 2. For the rhythms, we added a little bit of drive going into the front of the Fender Deluxe, just to push it a little harder. Actually, I committed the *ultimate* sin right before I went down to make the record…

Indulge us!
There's something you need to do with those 5A3 Fender Deluxes. They don't like taking pedals in front and a lot of purists say you shouldn't change them because they sound amazing on their own. So I have to confess — and I might get some crap for this — but I took it to my buddy who tweaked something so it could take pedals a little better. And now with the record done, we can return it to its old glory. I knew that amp was going to be such an important part of the sound but needed to make sure that if I was going to do leads, it would let pedals do what they do for us guitar players. That little push makes everything a little easier!

> **"Back in the day, I transcribed a fair amount of solos by Larry Carlton and Robben Ford. Those guys, like Clapton, know how to say more with one note than five or 10"**

The solo on "Worried Mind" shows another side of your playing — minimalist Clapton-esque blues with the odd diminished line.
Though I wouldn't consider him to be old school blues, Larry Carlton was such an important part of my development, especially the way he'd integrate diminished ideas or outside-sounding lines in a blues context. Back in the day, I transcribed a fair amount of solos by him and Robben Ford. Those guys, like Clapton, know how to say more with one note than five or 10. When I heard them for the first time, I knew it was something I would have to try and understand… they're the *masters*! And as far as the diminished side of it, when I discovered what you can do with those half-whole or whole-half tones, boy… it opened up an entirely new world. And I learned it from those guys, but there are a lot of new players who do that brilliantly. One of my favorites is Josh Smith; I have his instructional thing where he explains what he's doing. If you are on the one chord, diminished ideas seem to work really well as you do that change, using them to lead into the four!

CHUCK BRUECKMANN



Kirk Douglas: "The SG shape has a lot of contours going on, a lot of bevels. The Inverness Green really highlights and accentuates those lines"

Kirk Douglas

HOW THE ROOTS GUITARIST AND *FALLON* VETERAN HELPED TURN THE "UNDERREPRESENTED" SG INTO A JACK OF ALL TRADES

By Richard Bienstock

"CAPTAIN" KIRK DOUGLAS' affiliation with Gibson goes back roughly two decades, to when the brand furnished him with two Les Pauls to play — and then, apparently, set on fire — in a Heineken commercial. "But Gibson was cool with it," Douglas recalls, adding that he subsequently refurbished one of the charred instruments and used it on tour with the Roots for several years after.

Douglas' relationship with Gibson was, um, reignited a few years later, when the Roots became the house band on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*. Not long after, Gibson approached him about designing his own signature guitar, and, he recalls, "I thought the SG was a bit underrepresented in that world. So it was a great opportunity to create the SG I would want to buy."

That guitar became the Kirk Douglas SG, and now Gibson and Douglas have collaborated on a new version of that signature instrument, taking Douglas' unique tweaks to the next level. And to be sure, this is not your conventional SG. Rather, the new models boasts a trio of BurstBucker pickups, each with its own volume control equipped with a push/pull pot that switches the pickup from humbucker to single coil. There's also a single master tone knob and, in place of the second tone control, *another* push/pull volume control that allows for the middle BurstBucker to be blended in with the other (one or two) pickups. Once you find your desired mix, you can leave everything as is and control the guitar's overall output via the pickguard-mounted master volume knob.

The result is a ridiculous amount of tonal options, which makes sense for a player who, whether with the Roots or with Fallon, has to be able to switch between rock, funk, pop, R&B and any number of styles at the flick of a (toggle) switch. "The idea was to make it so that you can get everything you need out of one guitar," Douglas says. "That's the beauty of this SG."

> **This SG makes sense for Douglas, who — with the Roots or with Fallon — has to be able to switch between rock, funk, pop and r&b at the flick of a (toggle) switch**

That beauty extends to the rest of the guitar's features, which include a Lyre Tail Vibrola (engraved, in a subtle touch, with the word "Captain" in place of "Gibson"), non-locking Keystone tuners, a SlimTaper mahogany neck and a rosewood fretboard with 22 medium jumbo frets and large block acrylic inlays. And it all comes packaged in two striking finishes — Ebony with gold appointments and a very striking Inverness Green with nickel hardware. Of the latter color option, Douglas says, "the SG shape has a lot of contours going on, a lot of bevels. And the Inverness Green really highlights and accentuates those lines."

And while the end result is a guitar ideally suited to Douglas' wide-ranging six-string needs, it's also guaranteed to appeal to players of every stripe. "The story doesn't stop when you bring it home," Douglas says of his SG. "That's when the story begins. The guitar is there for you to do whatever you want to do with it."

GIBSON



Hearty Har's Tyler [*left*] and Shane Fogerty

COURTESY OF BIG HASSLE

Hearty Har

THE SONS OF CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL FRONTMAN JOHN FOGERTY TAKE THEIR FATHER'S LESSONS TO BOLD NEW PLACES

By Joshua M. Miller

GUITARS ARE AN essential nutrient when it comes to L.A. rockers Hearty Har. Whether it's the Byrds-like 12-string guitar twinges on "Radio Man '56" or the spaghetti western instrumental "Canyon of the Banshee," the instrument plays a critical role in the sound on the band's debut, *Radio Astro*, which was released in February.

The band is led by Tyler and Shane Fogerty, sons of Creedence Clearwater Revival frontman John Fogerty. While their father was mostly hands-off in their musical learning, he occasionally gave them pointers on the differences between guitars and how to play riffs, including AC/DC's "Back in Black."

"That was a big moment of joy for him, when we finally wanted to learn how to rock instead of just skateboarding and other stuff," Tyler says. "He wasn't hands-on in trying to influence what we were going to listen to or play. We discovered that stuff on our own. But, when we were kids, we'd ask, 'What sound is that?' And he'd tell us, 'That's a Strat and that's a Tele' or 'That's a delay' — because he's obsessed with guitars, obviously. We took that into our own thing and experimented to find out for ourselves."

Initial attempts to record an album stalled.

> "That was a big moment of joy for [our father] — when we finally wanted to learn how to rock instead of just skateboarding and other stuff"
>
> — *TYLER FOGERTY*

"We weren't happy with letting other people inform how our record sounded; we had very specific ideas, and that took precedence over anything else," Tyler says. That inspired the brothers to start their own studio, where they were free to experiment and dial in the sounds they heard in their heads. "We got new band members and we learned how to be engineers," Shane says. "We just love to experiment with sounds and try new things."

The result is an album rich in a variety of influences, old and new. "Canyon of the Banshee" goes for a "Ennio Morricone meets David Gilmour, Pink Floyd-y psychedelic" sound. Tyler recorded with a Rickenbacker 370, a '66 Strat, a Hofner and six- and 12-string Vox Starstream guitars.

"Just being in here in a studio, you're driving the spaceship and you're kind of attuning," Shane explains. "Like, writing a song — it comes seemingly out of nowhere, but you have to be turning your antenna out in order to receive it."

The Fogerty brothers feel the band works well because of the familial trust they have in each other. Says Tyler, "I think music is a tricky thing, and having somebody in your family in your band can be a great thing if you really trust him. It's definitely nice to have a strong core of this band."



"I used [the Phenix 1954 Gibson Les Paul Custom] for the solo at the end of 'Reckoner,'" Frampton says. "It's all over the album, actually"

Peter Frampton

THE TALKBOX-TOTING GUITAR LEGEND TALKS NEW COVERS ALBUM, MODDED MARSHALLS AND BEING REUNITED WITH HIS PRIZED LES PAUL CUSTOM AFTER 30 YEARS

By Amit Sharma

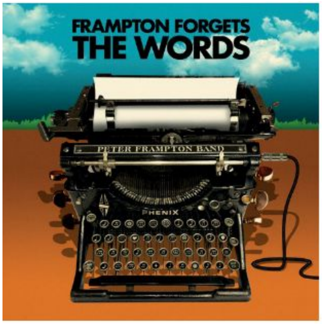
PETER FRAMPTON'S NEW album — brilliantly titled *Frampton Forgets the Words* — sees the British guitar legend tackling songs by Radiohead, Lenny Kravitz, George Harrison and David Bowie, using his instrument to replace the well-known vocal melodies of the originals. As he explains, there's an art to making the guitar talk. And he should know; it is, after all, what he's been doing for decades.

One of the covers is "Isn't It a Pity" from George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass*, an album you played on. Harrison, along with Pete Drake, is sort of responsible — even indirectly — for introducing you to the talkbox.

That's true. It's on YouTube, actually, the audio from when Pete Drake put that tube into his mouth after setting it all up, and the pedal steel started singing to us. You can hear George talking and me laughing, I think. It was just jaw-dropping. When I first heard Stevie Wonder's *Music of My Mind*, he was using The Bag, made by a company called Kustom, for background voices and ad-libs. I thought, "Now *there's* a sound!" Then I heard Jeff Beck do a Beatles number ["She's a Woman"] with it, and after that I was sitting in front of Pete Drake at Abbey Road — and I see it. He completed the circle for me. And of course the next thing out of my mouth was, 'Where do I get one?'"

What was the answer?

Well, he didn't know because there weren't any commercially available ones back then. It turns out he made it himself. After that, his wife lent that exact one to Joe Walsh, who used it on "Rocky Mountain Way." I've spoken to Joe about this and it's absolutely true. He went to Bob Heil, whose PAs we used in Humble Pie when starting out in America; Joe was good friends with him because they were both HAM radio enthusiasts. Joe asked Bob to make one even louder because, as we all know, we guitarists like to turn themselves up — "More of me!" So Bob Heil set about making one and put a much stronger driver in it so that it was capable of supporting a 100-watt Marshall for a few minutes, before it blew up. [*Laughs*]



"Every time I play a solo, even if I've been playing it for 20 years, I want a fresh canvas. I want to go somewhere I haven't been before; otherwise, what's the point?"

Looking back now, getting your hands on it was a life-changing decision.
Definitely. But I still think the quintessential solo, the best of the best, is Joe Walsh coming in on "Rocky Mountain Way." It's phenomenal. When it goes to the four chord, he switches to slide and takes it over the top. I'm getting goosebumps just thinking about it. The talkbox was something I *had* to have. As soon as I got it, my agent told me I had to move up from the opening spot to the middle spot on a three-act show. Which was fantastic, up the ladder another run. And then I found out I was playing underneath Joe Walsh. So guess who played the talkbox first that year? I don't think Joe was too thrilled, but we've laughed about it since. That was the first tour I used it on, before I'd even had a chance to record with it.

What's the secret to getting a guitar to replicate vocal melodies?
I'm a melodic player at heart. Looking all the way back to the beginning, my first hero band was the Shadows. They were the first thing I listened to and learned how to play, all the hits and album tracks. I went from that to Django Reinhardt and jazz, which is very lyrical. My guitar became another voice of mine. For example, "Avalon" by Roxy Music is one of my all-time favorite records. I would use it to EQ my speakers on my sound system — that's how good the album is. So the cover is my tribute to them, because the vocals on that album are so laid black and flown away. It feels like that's the track I got the closest on, as a guitarist replicating vocals. And "Reckoner" by Radiohead, no one knows what Thom Yorke was singing about anyway. He's a bit like Michael [McDonald] from the Doobie Brothers — you can't understand what that guy's saying!

You worked closely with David Bowie during parts of your career. On this album you've covered "Loving the Alien," which was on the setlist for the Glass Spider tour you did together.
Exactly! That's why I chose that track. I loved the song, but I loved most of David's stuff anyway. That was the number he gave me for a stretched out solo, it was my party piece on that tour. I wanted to pay tribute to David for giving me this incredible gift, reintroducing me to fans around the world as the musician, not the pop star. It was cathartic to go back to. There was a lot of passion involved on that track.

There are some jazzy moments too, like on the cover of Sly and the Family Stone's "If You Want Me to Stay."
I don't really think about or even want to know what I'm going to play. I blank my mind out and let it happen. This album was all done together live, but when I do any overdubs, we usually choose the first take or the first of a series in-between breaks and cups of tea. I've never been one that relied on or wished to be a shredder of speed, because the notes go by so quickly you don't enjoy them. For me, it's about the choice of notes. There's no guitar on the Miles Davis records I listen to, but it doesn't matter because I'm listening to his choice of notes. And he'll play one note over seven chord changes, but it's the *right* note. It's so important to me — not how many notes I play but which ones. Some people have told me I never play the same thing twice and I always say, "I hope I never do!" That's what I want to achieve as a guitarist. Every time I play a solo, even if I've been playing it for 20 years, I want a fresh canvas. I want to go somewhere I haven't been before; otherwise, what's the point? I guess I'm a jazzer at heart.

Well, we did notice a few diminished runs on that track!
I'm glad you noticed! That all probably comes from Django. He couldn't go 30 seconds without playing a diminished line. I just sat down one day and said, "Let me just learn this!" and figure out what he was doing. Since then, even on tracks like "Georgia on My Mind" from my *All Blues* record, I've stuck them in. I find when you are on the five chord — which is the dominant — just before you back to the one, you can throw that diminished idea right in there and have some fun.

You've been reunited with your 1954 Phenix Les Paul Custom for a while, having spent three decades thinking it had been destroyed in a cargo crash. Did that get used on the album?
I used it for the solo at the end of "Reckoner." It's all over the album, actually. A lot of the time I would do the melody on my '59 ES-335 and then do the solo with the Phenix. And my goodness, *what* a story. Things like this don't normally happen. After 30 years, you don't expect to see an instrument you thought went into the earth. We were told it went up in the fireball of the crash, but it was removed from the tail of the plane, which broke off and didn't have as much fire. It singed, and instead of the Gibson inlay on the headstock, the bits that are left make a lucky seven. I find that very interesting! Right now I have the great Tom Holmes pickups in there and I love them, but it doesn't matter… whatever pickup you use will sound like the solo from "Lines on My Face." Gibson and I had tried for some time in the Nineties to recreate it from memory. I tried to tell them every detail I could, like the neck size and weight. We came up with a beautiful guitar that looked exactly the same, but of course it wasn't. I was very happy and had about three or four of them. Then I got the original back and it doesn't sound *anything* like those ones.

And you've generally been using three 100-Watt Marshall Super Leads — one original and two built by John Suhr.
In the Eighties I got in touch with [amp modder] Jose Arrendondo. He said find me an early Seventies Marshall and I'll make it sound great for you. So he did, then unfortunately we lost Jose and I needed some backups. John Suhr took the Jose and reverse-engineered it for me. John is an incredible luthier, amp maker, pedal maker… he never ceases to amaze me.

KEVIN NIXON/FUTURE



Ayla Tesler-Mabe in action with Ludic

Ludic

WITH HER NEW BAND, FORMER CALPURNIA GUITARIST (AND WEEZER MUSIC VIDEO STAR) AYLA TESLER-MABE HEADS FOR UNDERSTATED, GROOVE-FORWARD WATERS

By Gregory Adams

"I REMEMBER ABOUT a year into my playing I started learning the 'Back in Black' solo; [that's when] I discovered vibrato. I was like, 'this actually sounds, for a brief moment here and there, somewhat like the song!'"

Ludic guitarist Ayla Tesler-Mabe is recalling the breakthrough moment in her early teens when she first got the hang of Angus Young-style string theatrics. In the years since, she's amassed a massive online following by bringing that glowing vibrato and peppery scale work to YouTube run-throughs of classics like Led Zeppelin's "Since I've Been Loving You" (nearly 6.5 million views and counting); her dextrous fretboard adventurism has also made her a NAMM showcase regular. But with Ludic, the Vancouver-based guitarist is often locking into more understated, groove-forward guitarplay.

"I've always had influences that transcend whatever project I'm working on at the time," Tesler-Mabe says in reference to taking a more stylistic approach alongside Ludic's brotherly rhythm section of bassist Max and drummer Rhett Cunningham. That's not to say the trio's songs don't have their share of knuckle-busting leads — sample the unhinged, Eddie Hazel-inspired crunging on the band's "Call Me" for proof — but the razor-sharp, Boss chorus-warped rhythms slicing through lithe neo-soul struts like "Heart Emoji" and "Terrified" owe more to vibe than sheer prowess.

"That's a huge part of funk playing, you find the appropriate pocket to accentuate… wanting everything to feel like it's there for a reason," Tesler-Mabe says of her integral, deceptively simple flourishes. "The more you listen, the more you hear these little guitar licks peeking through here and there, textural stuff like that. It was about trying to weave a bed of sound as opposed to having guitar as a lead instrument."

> **"That's a huge part of funk playing, you find the appropriate pocket to accentuate… wanting everything to feel like it's there for a reason"**
> *— AYLA TESLER-MABE*

Though now laser focused on Ludic, Tesler-Mabe's career previously included a run with Calpurnia, a scrappy pop-rock act that toured the globe — even subbing in as a teenaged Weezer in the latter's "Take On Me" music video — before splitting in 2019. Now, Tesler-Mabe is fine-tuning her stealthy funk approach as Ludic transitions from a recent spate of digital singles and the three-song *Live @ the Warehouse* EP toward delivering a more full-bodied release.

"We were putting out singles just the past little while to test the waters," she says of Ludic's long-game, adding, "We might not start with an album right off the bat, but there's a bigger body of work coming soon."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** 1966 Fender Coronado II; 1967 Gretsch 6117 Double Anniversary; Fender Ultra Stratocaster; Fender Meteora; Ernie Ball Music Man Valentine
- **AMPS** 1973 Fender Twin Reverb, Fender Hot Rod DeVille III
- **EFFECTS** Lawrence Petross Design Sixty 8 Deluxe; Aleks K Production Honey Moon Sweet Overdrive 2; Boss DD-7 Digital Delay; Boss TR-2 Tremolo; Boss CE-2 Waza Craft Chorus; Electro-Harmonix POG, MXR Phase 90

RICHARD GONZALEZ



Evile's Ol Drake with his handmade Carillion guitar

Evile

WITH LEAD GUITARIST OL DRAKE NOW MANNING THE MIC, ENGLAND'S EVILE RETURN TO UNLEASH VINTAGE THRASH METAL HELL WITH THEIR LATEST ALBUM

By Jeff Kitts

YOU KNOW YOUR band is a dead-ringer for classic Eighties thrash metal bands when one of your songs gets posted on YouTube every year under the heading "New Metallica Song 20xx," and people believe it. In actuality, the recurring song is "Underworld," the lead track from respected British speed metallers Evile's 2013 album, *Skull*. "Every year it gets millions of views and people are like, 'Oh my god, James Hetfield sounds great!' " says Evile guitarist and now vocalist Ol Drake. "It's pretty funny."

Since the group's 2007 Earache Records debut, *Enter the Grave*, Evile have kept a stranglehold on their reputation for keeping the sound of vintage thrash very much alive in the modern era. Over the course of four albums following the debut, including the current release, *Hell Unleashed*, Evile have always made sure to give their fans exactly what they want; you might consider Evile the millennial thrash metal equivalent of AC/DC.

"Look, no one wants to hear us progress," Drake says. "They just want to hear Slayer." [*Laughs*]

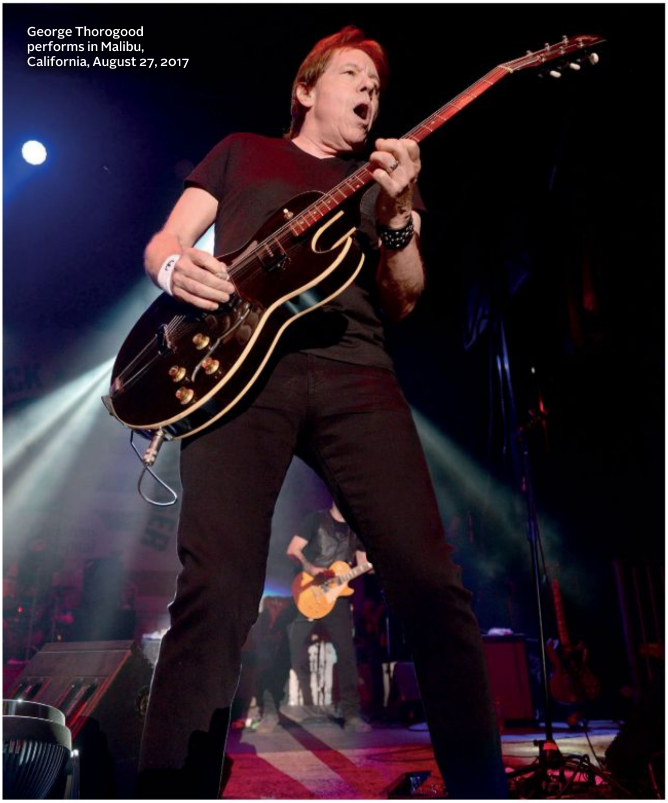
> **"Look, no one wants to hear us progress. They just want to hear Slayer"**
>
> *—OL DRAKE*

Evile may be consistent almost to a fault with their unrelenting style of precision thrash, but the same cannot be said of their lineup, which has undergone significant changes in recent times. In August 2013, Drake — who had been the group's lead guitarist alongside his rhythm guitarist/lead vocalist brother Matt since Evile's days of playing covers in the early 2000s — left the group for personal reasons. He returned in October 2018, finished writing the music for *Hell Unleashed* by July 2019 — and soon after, it was brother Matt's turn to vacate the group.

With Ol now being the only Drake in Evile, he was tasked with writing the lyrics for the music he had written and took it upon himself to step up to the mic to take over vocal duties. As a first-time lead singer, Drake struggled with his new role in the early stages of making *Hell Unleashed*. "When I had to record the demos in my house, with just me shouting into a microphone, I quickly noticed that I could taste blood in my throat. I'm still learning how to sing."

Drake, who recorded the majority of *Hell Unleashed* with his handmade Carillion Flying V-style guitar and a 50-watt EVH 5150III amp — "It just sounded better and cut through more than the bigger version" — is adamant about just how strong of a metal record the new album is. "I'd go so far as to say it's the best thrash metal album in the past 20 years."

KARL SMITH



George Thorogood performs in Malibu, California, August 27, 2017

SCOTT DUDELSON/GETTY IMAGES

? INQUIRER GEORGE THOROGOOD

LONESOME GEORGE TALKS ROOTS, HIS FIRST GUITAR AND THE WONDERS OF THE ES-125

■ Boom, boom...
The first person who really got me into guitar was John Lee Hooker. I'd been fooling around with his music for a while, so he was the first of many who'd go on to influence me.

■ I got my first real six-string...
It was a Segovia guitar given to me as a Christmas present when I was 15. I later traded it in for a Framus bass. There was a band up the street, and so I went to audition as the singer for the band. I wasn't the greatest singer, I just knew a lot of words to a lot of songs and so they wanted me in the band, but they already had two guitar players. And because I'd only been playing guitar for about three days, I didn't know how to play it well enough. So they said, "All we need is a bass player." So I switched over to bass for a while.

■ The first song I mastered...
I'm still working on that, so I'll get there one of these days! [*Laughs*]. There are two songs I did learn; "Honest I Do" by Jimmy Reed and "I Can't Be Satisfied" by Muddy Waters. They were the first two songs I actually figured out how to play and do.

■ Making my live stage debut...
It was when I was 15 and my band played at my twin sisters' 13th birthday party. My first real official gig, though, was when I opened for Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee in 1973 in Joe's Place in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

■ Embarrassing moment onstage...
There are way too many to count, and I can't really share any stories because I don't think the parents of the *GW* readers who are under 18 would want to hear about them. I've had memorable times on stage, in fact every single one of them was. When I'm [performing], I'm thankful I have a gig — and that I've got a job.

> **"When I'm [performing], I'm thankful I have a gig — and that I've got a job"**

■ The blues are for life...
Though I do like all sorts of music, I got into the blues early on because the people I admired, and who played guitar like Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry, Keith Richards and Brian Jones, Elvin Bishop and John Hammond, that was what they learned from. They learned from the blues, and because of that, I followed their example in doing the same. As far as music goes, I love to listen to Jimmy Cliff and I'd listen to him all day. I love Hank Williams, Marty Robbins and Willy Deville, and I'm crazy about Wilson Pickett.

■ The ES-125 is king...
My favorite guitar is the Gibson ES-125 single cutaway with two P-90 pickups, but I've worn them out and they don't make them anymore. So now I'm playing an Epiphone, based on the model of the Gibson 125. So that's my favorite now.

■ Blues 101...
The advice I'd give young guitar players starting out is don't listen to anything I have to say! But I'd say Number one, and Johnny Winter once said this too, it would be always to play for fun, as the more fun you have when you play, the better you'd get at it. And the better you get at it, the more fun you'll have. But if it's not fun, then stop and do something else.

■ Live in Boston....
The live album I recently released, ***Live in Boston, 1982: The Complete Concert,*** is a snapshot of practically all the gigs we were doing those days. I like to say it was something special, but to be honest really, all our shows are special. That one just happened to be recorded!

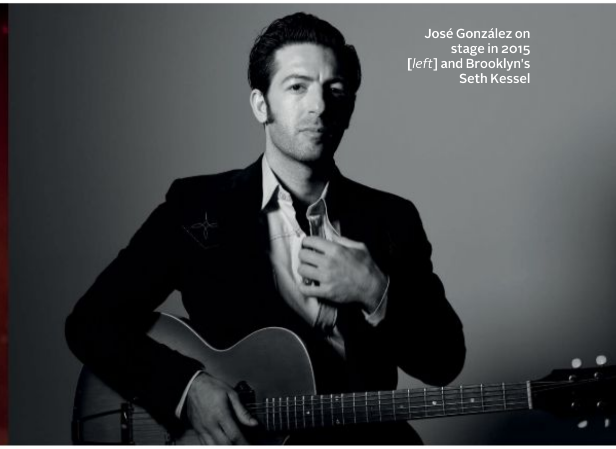
— Joe Matera

New Music, Anyone?

THIS MONTH: SOME VERY WELCOME TUNEAGE FROM GREG KOCH, SETH KESSEL, JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ AND MORE

By Amit Sharma, Andy Aledort and Damian Fanelli





José González on stage in 2015 [*left*] and Brooklyn's Seth Kessel

José González "El Invento"



THE FIRST TRACK from José González in six years is a spellbindingly ethereal listen and features the Argentinian-Swedish folk musician singing in Spanish for the first time in tribute to his young daughter. As on previous recordings, there's a sense of soul-baring sincerity and deep introspection to his nylon-charged lullabies, driven by the warmth of his classical fingerpicking and some truly mouth-watering chord voicings. It's as human as music can get — one simple guitar part used to maximum effect, delivered dry and raw to place the listener in the same room as the musician with little in between. — *AS*

Arielle "Peace of Mind"



BRIAN MAY AND Eric Johnson have been early supporters of Arielle's career, and it's easy to see why. The singer-songwriter has a knack for writing pop melodies of old in contemporary form and dialing in some truly head-turning vintage tones. "She is a truly phenomenal player, with an ability to produce the most beautiful tones as well as technical mastery," said Brian May, whose company will be putting out her first signature model, based on the "Two-Tone" guitar she built at 16. "Arielle's playing reaches places I never knew existed," he added. "I believe this guitar will do the same." — *AS*

Koch Marshall Trio "Luna Girl"

FROM THE UP'NUH is the sophomore release from this Milwaukee-based trio led by brilliant six-string wizard Greg Koch, and featuring Toby Lee Marshall on organ and Koch's son Dylan on drums/percussion. Across the disc's 12 tracks, Greg's versatility is crystal clear, from the hybrid-picked "Luna Girl" to the twisted rock/funk of "The Tussle" and "Funky Klaus," the Steely Dan-jazz vibe of "Succulent," the fantastic covers of Johnny "Guitar" Watson's "Real Mother for Ya" and Albert King's "Drowning on Dry Land" and the kitschy shtick of "Quarentonne" (about gaining weight during quarantine). — *AA*

The Devils (feat. Alain Johannes) "Beast Must Regret Nothing"

THERE'S A STRANGE, hypnotic pull to this single from Italian duo the Devils — who enlisted prolific multi-instrumentalist Alain Johannes to produce their third album, *Beast Must Regret Nothing*. Having been a member of Queens of the Stone Age, Them Crooked Vultures, Eleven and Chris Cornell's solo band, as well as producer and solo artist in his own right, Johannes lends his voice and inimitable cigar-box strums to their boiling cauldron of scuzzy alternative blues. It's an addictive listen from start to end. — *AS*

Seth Kessel "Let That Train Roll By"

THIS INFECTIOUS, 2.5-MINUTE barn burner is one of a pair of already-issued gems from this Brooklyn-based roots rocker's new album, *Ride on Through*. The song — which has an unmistakable Nick Curran vibe — arrives wrapped in the oft-ignored key of C♯ and boasts some fun chord changes (that C♯ to F kills me every time) and plenty of straight-into-the-amp Gretsch-hollowbody action. "This song is about learning from mistakes with poisonous people," Kessel says. "[The song title] means don't get on that ride. Just stand there and let it pass. Don't answer the texts or calls. Be very still and she'll go away." — *DF*

LEFT: ELENA DI VINCENZO/ARCHIVIO ELENA DI VINCENZO RIGHT: SHERVIN LAINEZ


EC
PHOENIX
M-7BHT
M-HT
ARROW-NT

POWER LUNCH

ON TODAY'S MENU: 10 TRIED-AND-TRUE LUNCHBOX AMPS THAT EAT OTHER AMPS FOR BREAKFAST

BY PAUL RIARIO

THE LUNCHBOX: WHEN you were a kid, it was a fashionable, efficient means of transporting the goods for a delicious lunch. And let's not forget that its coolness factor was increased by whatever was emblazoned on its metal walls and faceplate — designs or logos that advertised what you dug in pop culture. So, how exciting is it for guitarists that some of our favorite amplifier heads (and some original designs) now come in lunchbox size?!?

How did we ever get to the point that a single-handle lunch container would be reimagined as an amplifier head? Well, it seems only fitting that the Orange Tiny Terror — the first commercial, and wildly successful, lunchbox amp head (introduced in 2006) — was conceived at a restaurant. To be fair, the THD UniValve preceded the Tiny Terror by five years and was most likely the first lunchbox-style amp head, but it went largely unnoticed due to





the low number of units produced. But there's no denying that the emerging popularity of lunchbox amps can be attributed to the Tiny Terror and its many iterations, which inspired other companies to launch similarly stylized versions of this theme.

Lunchbox amps now come in all shapes and sizes, with various power ratings and attenuation, channels and up-to-date features, as well as their own hip look — just like those lunch pails you toted around the school cafeteria. So, if you're looking to deliver the tonal goods, here are 10 of our favorite tried-and-true lunchbox amps, all of which can seriously compete with big-box amps — and not break your back when you carry them with one hand.

HUGHES & KETTNER
TubeMeister Deluxe 20

$759, hughes-and-kettner.com

The Hughes & Kettner TubeMeister Deluxe 20 offers two channels that promise pristine cleans, authentic "brown" sounds and modern high-gain tone — all from a tube-driven amp with an onboard power soak that's selectable between 20W, 5W and 1W operation. H&K's proprietary onboard Red Box DI lets you send a speaker-simulated signal straight to your recording setup or a PA. The Deluxe 20 is a brighter-sounding amp — especially with single coils through its cleaner settings. However, bumping up the master volume offers much more touch-responsive chime and body. The second channel adds tweed-influenced grit and a tighter gain sound that's crunchy and firm. There are high-gain sounds to be had here, but those are achieved with slightly less warmth and more aggression. Having the boost function is a great option for more sustain while also adding body to solos. The Deluxe 20 is the kind of amp that excels when its EL84 power tubes are working hard, so the most satisfying tones will be found by cranking up those master volumes.

EVH
5150III LBXII

$699.99, evhgear.com

It might be small, but the LBXII packs a serious punch. Not only is it crammed with great rock tone, but there's plenty of volume — more than enough to cover small to medium gigs, even on the quarter-power setting. Even using a Strat fitted with standard low-ish output single coils, the gain and distortion borders on the cheerfully insane: harmonic squeals fly off the pick and the LBXII's medium-fast attack is excellent for modern rock and metal chop rhythm patterns. You can go from snappy cleans through to mild blues overdrive on the green channel, or switch to the blue channel for all the gain and filth you'll ever need. Overall, the LBXII's core "Plexi"-inspired tone has a very modern USA vibe: it's perfect for modern rock and most metal subgenres, and you can tune it to perfection using the presence and resonance controls.

LUNCHBOX AMPS NOW COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES, WITH VARIOUS POWER RATINGS AND ATTENUATION, CHANNELS AND FEATURES, AS WELL AS THEIR OWN HIP LOOK — JUST LIKE THOSE LUNCH PAILS YOU TOTED AROUND THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

MESA/BOOGIE
Mini-Rectifier

$1,407, mesaboogie.com

Despite its 25-watt rating, the Mini Rectifier will surprise you with its volume, poise and sheer size of sound — even through a single 1 x 12 cab. Featuring "two-channels with four modes," channel one has a Fender-like clean response with a goodly dollop of high-end presence and full, extended bass. You could happily twang out "Sultans of Swing" here with a Strat, or get into funky choppy rhythms. The clean mode will overdrive if you push the gain pot, but the "Pushed" mode immediately ups the signal's gain for a punchier clean tone. With a Tele, and in 25-watt mode, the combined thump and sizzle from open-position chords is a sound you've heard on countless records, from the Stones to the Georgia Satellites. Channel two's "vintage" mode sounds like a heavily modded classic rock head — fat and saturated — with plenty of loose bottom-end resonance. The "modern" mode gets much closer to the "Rectifier" name with more presence, tighter bottom-end response and more cutting mid-range.





ORANGE
Rocker 15 Terror

$649, orangeamps.com

Since the discontinuation of the lauded Tiny Terror, the Rocker 15 Terror takes its place as the dual-channel, half-powered version of the Rocker 30 in the lunchbox format. With its attenuator switch, the Rocker 15's full and half-power modes switch between 15, 7, 1 or even half a Watt. In half-power mode, the amp is able to retain the springiness and feel of a big amp. The "Natural" channel is essentially the "clean" channel (there's no EQ here) but those supposed transparent cleans get dirty quickly when pushing the knob close to noon, where you'll find bluesy crunch as the norm — but hey, it's called "Rocker" for good reason. The "Dirty" channel features controls for Gain, Master Volume and a three-band EQ, and here's where the gamut of British-style crunch and gain resides. At half-power, the "Dirty" channel politely serves up ample gain for bedroom shredding, but the amp's richness and filth materialize at full power, where we find tons of saggy compression and chainsaw distortion on tap to pleasure those who like their gain excessively fat for modern metal.



PEAVEY 6505 MH

$599.99, peavey.com



The Peavey 6505 MH may be small, but its sound is massive. The rhythm channel produces very impressive clean headroom as well as aggressive, ballsy crunch tones with plenty of chunk and chime. The lead channel takes over a little beyond where the rhythm channel's most rowdy setting leaves off, providing delicious high-gain distortion with an impressive low-end thump. Whereas many small amp heads can sound fizzy, buzzy and compressed with the preamp gain maxed out, the 6505 MH delivers dynamic punch and gutsy attack just like its big brother. The amp's controls are very versatile but also interactive, so dialing in desired tones can require a bit of tweaking trial and error, particularly at the 1-watt setting where the resonance and presence controls can really make a big difference. While some may view the shared EQ section as a limitation, the rhythm and lead channels are voiced similarly enough that it's easy to dial in EQ settings that sound great on both channels. The built-in digital reverb is a welcome addition, but because it's more of a plate-style reverb than room or spring, I found that a little went a long way and it was best to keep the reverb control no higher than 10 o'clock.



PRS MT15

$749, prsguitars.com

Without a doubt, the PRS MT 15 is the biggest-sounding lunchbox amp we've ever played. The 6L6 tubes and meticulously dialed-in circuit are the key, delivering crisp pick articulation, punchy percussive attack and impressive bass that will tremble your trouser legs when playing the amp through a large speaker cabinet. The high-gain tones sound killer with dense layers of harmonically rich distortion and sophisticated detail, and the distortion tones get bigger, tighter and more forcefully powerful as the master volume is turned up. However, we're even more impressed by how punchy, big, and three-dimensional the clean sounds are, particularly with a delay unit connected to the FX loop. The Clean channel maintains impressive clean headroom, even with the volume control turned all the way up on the 15-watt output setting, and the volume level of both channels almost match when both are turned all the way up. Engaging the Clean channel's boost allows the Clean channel's output level to match even closer while adding overdrive grit that's delightfully raunchy without being too dirty.

REVV AMPS G20

$1,299, revvamplification.com

The Revv G20's Fender-influenced clean sound is smooth and warm, with enough range on the controls to add extra sparkle for humbuckers or emphasize midrange for single coils. The Wide function helps at lower volume levels by adding bass and treble to the clean channel, or more of a low-end push to the lead channel, making the G20 sound louder and bigger. Switching to the lead channel activates the gain control and unleashes the Revv's signature solo tone, rich in harmonics with a sweet Californian-inspired top-end that can be made to squeal or snarl on demand, using the three-stage Aggression switch, which changes color to indicate which mode is active. The G20's 20-watt full output provides plenty of punch for small to medium gigs while the 4-watt setting is perfect for studio use, allowing the amp to be cranked up at more sensible decibel levels. The embedded Two Notes reactive load and cabinet emulation module offers six pre-loaded cabinets accessed from the six-way switch on the front panel. The G20's practically seamless integration between tubes, MIDI control and the Two Notes digital plug-in puts it in a league of its own.





VICTORY
V40 THE DUCHESS

$1,399, victoryamps.com

The spectacular Victory V40 "The Duchess" coaxes a wide range of low-to-medium drive tones and silky cleans that sound massive on their own, or further enhanced when combined with stompboxes as a pedal platform. Controls react exactly as intended; dialing back volume and upping the master sets up gorgeous cleans, and cranking both volume and master will nudge the amp towards musically rich overdrive, but it's all about how you wish to voice it: In Voice 1, the V40 draws out the classic soft and supple tones reminiscent of mid-Sixties Fender combos, where you'll find all the sustain and touch sensitivity at full power. Switching over to Voice II and increasing the volume ramps up some grittiness that closely duplicates the snappy attack of Tweed-era amps. Overall, the V40 is an even-tempered clean machine with balance and bite, and frankly, I'd choose this amp over anything else when faced with the many standard backline choices. (Check out the full review on page 73.)



VOX
MV50 AC

$219.99, voxamps.com

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Children of Bodom's Alexi Laiho performs in Milan, Italy, November 24, 2015

"WE COULD HAVE MADE OUR DIFFERENCES UP YEARS BEFORE. IT JUST SHOWS HOW FRAGILE LIFE AND FRIENDSHIP CAN BE"
— ROOPE LATVALA

ELENA DI VINCENZO/ARCHIVIO ELENA DI VINCENZO/MONDADORI PORTFOLIO VIA GETTY IMAGES

THE WILD TIMES, FINAL DAYS and LAST RECORDINGS of ALEXI LAIHO

1979—2020

FEATURING INTERVIEWS WITH HIS *BODOM AFTER MIDNIGHT* BANDMATES DANIEL FREYBERG AND MITJA TOIVONEN, PLUS FORMER *CHILDREN OF BODOM* GUITARIST ROOPE LATVALA.

BY JON WIEDERHORN • PHOTO BY ELENA DI VINCENZO

THE LAST THING CHILDREN of Bodom/Bodom After Dark frontman Alexi Laiho ever wanted to do is disappoint fans. That's why he refused to cancel any shows in late 2009 after the band's tour bus took a hard turn and he fell out of his tour bus bunk in the middle of the night and crashed to the ground, breaking his clavicle and a rib. The next day, Laiho was in agony, but he gutted it out and played the show. Two nights later, at the Uptown Theater in Kansas City, Missouri, he again persevered, but he was visibly angry that he wasn't at the top of his game.

"I gotta tell you something, man," he said before Bodom played "Hellhounds on my Trail." "I fucking apologize. I can't fuckin' move and I can't fuckin' sing and I'm fuckin' just standing here like a fuckin' idiot, so try to bear with me, alright?"

Energized by Laiho's bravery and tenacity, the crowd cheered, which, perhaps, raised his spirits and he summoned the strength to make it through the rest of the gig. Laiho grit his teeth night after night, and with the help of some heavy painkillers he made it to the eleventh gig of the No Fear tour with Lamb of God and Municipal Waste. That's when his body fought back.



Laiho at The Grove Music Studios, London, in 2015

Two songs into the set, as Bodom played "Hate Me!," Laiho hunched over and noticeably favored his side. The band started the third song, but Laiho was in too much agony to keep playing. He angrily flung his Jackson and stormed offstage. "I think my rib was sticking into one of my muscles," he later told this writer. "I felt like someone was stabbing me with a knife into my lungs and my heart. So I just couldn't keep going."

"It's not a great fucking feeling when you're playing in front of 3,000 people in New York, and all of a sudden you're behind the drum riser not being able to breathe and vomiting blood while people are chanting 'bullshit, bullshit,'" he said. "I'm sure most of the people didn't know what the hell was going on, so they just thought I would take off in the middle of the set and not come back. But I'm glad that [vocalist Tony Foresta] from Municipal went up there and explained to the crowd what was going on. After that, we just decided to go home. There were only four shows left anyway."

Crushed physically and mentally, Laiho flew back to Helsinki, Finland, to heal and prepare for the band's next scheduled tour. "He didn't want to cancel shows no matter what," says guitarist Daniel Freyberg, who met Laiho in 2005 and played in Children of Bodom from 2016 to 2019, replacing longtime guitarist Roope Latvala, who was abruptly fired in 2015. Three other members quit in 2019, leaving just Laiho and Freybery. So the two co-formed Bodom After Midnight with bassist Mitja Toivonen (ex-Santa Cruz) and drummer Waltteri Väyrynen. The group played three shows and recorded three songs for *Paint the Sky with Blood*. They planned to release the EP, play some more shows, then record a full album. At the end of 2020, however, when a COVID spike prevented BAM from playing any more shows, they decided to take a short break and then start working on a full album.

Tragically, that never happened. On December 29, Laiho died from damage sustained from years of alcohol abuse. He was 41. Ex-Sinergy vocalist Kimberly Goss, who Laiho married in 2002 and separated from in 2004, posted that the guitar whiz died from "alcohol-induced degeneration of the liver and pancreas connective tissue. Furthermore, he had a cocktail of opioids and insomnia medication in his system."

For those who knew him over the years it was a shock — but not a complete surprise. In his late teens, Laiho was a cutter and suffered from depression. In 1998, he tried to kill himself by swallowing 30 tranquilizers with a few shots of whiskey, following the release of Children of Bodom's first album, *Something Wild*. He later said pouring all of his energy into the band saved his life. Laiho was obsessive about the band and loved playing and partying with other talented musicians, which sometimes put him in precarious positions when he was just trying to have fun. In 2004, he fell off the top of a car, breaking his wrist and smashing up his face. He was in a cast for a month, forcing the band to cancel their slot on the Dimebag Darrell tribute in Finland. In 2007, he fell in a bowling alley and broke his arm. Laiho was unable to play for six weeks this time and had to miss the Dubai

JOBY SESSIONS/FUTURE



"YOU NEVER KNOW IF THE PART YOU LEARNED ON MONDAY WOULD BE THE SAME THING YOU'D PLAY IN FRIDAY'S REHEARSAL BECAUSE THE RIFF MIGHT NOT EVEN EXIST IN THE SONG ANYMORE" —MITJA TOIVONEN

Desert Rock Festival.

The party turned dark in 2011 when, after some heavy drinking, Laiho suffered extreme stomach pain, vomited blood for nine hours and was rushed to an L.A. hospital. He was later diagnosed with stomach ulcers.

Latvala, who played with Children of Bodom from 2004 to 2015, says Laiho wasn't the crazed hedonist he was portrayed as in the press and went through long stretches of sobriety. The problem, says the guitarist, was that Laiho didn't take care of himself, especially when he was on a bender.

"He wasn't very athletic," says Latvala in a rare interview. "He didn't move at all except if 7-11 was, like, a block away. He didn't eat for shit, anyway, and then he never pooped. So he wasn't in any kind of health. I think he had the stomach problems because of that battery acid called [whiskey]. When it gets through your belly, that's heavy shit, especially if you don't eat. He was a pretty big whiskey drinker at one time, and it was a bad trip. I think he damaged himself over a long period of time. It wasn't an overnight kind of thing."

After Laiho's 2012 health scare, he cut back on partying and focused even more intently on making music. While his other band Sinergy — a power metal band that included vocalist and keyboardist Goss and Latvala — was a collaborative effort, Bodom was all Laiho. He wrote all the songs and lyrics and only asked for input from his bandmates after he wrote the songs.

"I really enjoyed when we had a session for guitar ideas after band practice," Freyberg recalls. "Just the two of us would get together and try different harmonies and things and you could really see how talented he was. He was like, "Okay, play that and I'll try something on top of it," and he'd come up with the most incredible stuff right on the spot. It was like, 'Whoa, where did those notes come from?'"

Laiho was a natural. He was also a perfectionist and practiced guitar for two hours before every show. Latvala recalls being blown away the first time he saw Laiho onstage in 1998.

"I was in a band called Nomicon and we were opening for them in this heavy metal bar in Helsinki," Latvala says. "I was astounded that this guy who was under 20 could play with that technique, and he was able to sing at the same time and make it all look really easy. When he was a little kid he started off playing violin, and that's where he was exposed to this different style of playing with a heavy focus on melody. He had amazing technique for those solos and he really did have the capability of continuing a solo with no breaks. It was more like a constant flow, which was pretty cool. He could play very interesting stuff."

Shortly after Laiho died, his handlers issued a cryptic statement that read, "[he] had suffered from long-term health issues in the years leading up to his death." Strangely, the members of Bodom After Midnight said Laiho didn't seem at all ill when they worked on *Paint the Sky with Blood*.

"He was totally feeling well when we started doing Bodom After Midnight," the guitarist says. "He was playing great and had all these ideas."

"It was business as usual," adds bassist Mitja Toivonen (ex-Santa Cruz). "We were all just having fun and making music."

Laiho started writing riffs for the *Paint the Sky with Blood* EP in the summer of 2020. Unlike COB, which featured plenty of swirling black metal keyboards and dueling solos between synth and guitar, Laiho wanted the new band to be more guitar-based. The first track he completed was the scorcher "Paint the Sky Blood Red," which features rapid-fire death and black metal riffs redolent of pre-2000 Children of Bodom. Soon after, Laiho finished the second BAM song, "Payback's a Bitch," a slower, grittier song that's more reminiscent of the melodeath tracks from 2005's *Are You Dead Yet*.

"The process was very old school," Freyberg says. "Alexi doesn't do demos beforehand. He comes to the rehearsals with riffs he wrote and he literally shows everybody how to play them. And then he has suggestions for some kind of drum beats to go with it. Then, the whole band puts a little bit of input into how the songs are arranged."

BAM were fine-tuning the songs when the Finnish government relaxed its COVID restrictions and the group booked three shows in Helsinki from October 23 to 25. So the band put its studio work on hold and started rehearsing Children of Bodom songs. The sets consisted entirely of Children of Bodom songs and Laiho was on fire. Moreover, he was lucid and seemingly sober.

"He had been a pretty calm guy for a while," Freyberg says. "After the shows, he gave the guitar to the guitar tech and went straight to bed. He wouldn't shower or anything. He'd just finish rocking and straight to bed. It was kind of funny, I was like, 'How can you do that? Don't you have like adrenaline in you that you have to burn off before you can sleep?' And he was just, 'Nope, I'm good.' Right to bed."

In late October, as COVID numbers started to spike, BAM returned to the studio to finish the EP. Having had some time to think about the original arrangements, Laiho returned to the songs with a fresh perspective.

"It was funny because Alexi suddenly went, 'You know the first rehearsals we had with the new tunes?'" recalled Toivonen. And we went, 'Yeah,' and started to play. And he went, 'Oh, no, it doesn't go like that anymore. I got a better idea.' He changed things around a lot. You never know if the part you learned on Monday would be the same thing you'd play in Friday's rehearsal because the riff might not even exist in the song anymore."

After the band finished tracking the two new songs, Väyrynen suggested BAM cover Dissection's haunting, black metal dirge "Where Dead Angels Lie." Laiho loved the idea and the band reinterpreted the song to make it slightly less morose.

"Children of Bodom was well known for doing sort of joke covers, like Britney Spears' 'Oops!... I Did it Again," Freyburg says. "So we were like, Why not do something different this time? And we actually took a really great, serious song, and our challenge was to say, 'Can we actually improve it?'"

In early December, Laiho heard the final mixes of the new EP and signed off on the artwork. Then, about 10 days before he died, Bodom After Midnight shot a music video for "Paint the Sky with Blood." Everyone had a good time during the shoot and Laiho joined his bandmates for a short party after they wrapped.

It's unclear whether or not Laiho's health was failing in his final days since everyone in the band took a few days off after the video shoot to celebrate Christmas and New Year's.



Laiho in the U.K. in 2007

> **"[ALEXI] WAS TOTALLY FEELING WELL WHEN WE STARTED DOING BODOM AFTER MIDNIGHT. HE WAS PLAYING GREAT AND HAD ALL THESE IDEAS"**
> —DANIEL FREYBERG

But both Freyberg and Taivonen were optimistic about the band's future.

"Alexi was very excited about stuff coming up the next year," Freyberg recalls. "We were going to start writing and rehearsing"

Freyberg was relaxing at home when Laiho's Finnish family called to tell him that his friend was gone. "I was immediately in such shock," he says. "I couldn't sleep at all that night or the night after. Probably the week after that was very, very difficult to have any sleep or do anything, you know? I mean, it still isn't easy. It's actually very hard to believe."

BAM's management company called Taivonen on New Year's Day to tell him about Laiho. At first, he thought there must have been a mistake. Then he hung up and his cell started blowing up.

"It was a slap in the face," he says. "And a few days after the whole thing went public it was another hit that came back since the news was everywhere. I turned off my phone and shut off from the world for a little bit. I didn't need it to be rubbed again in my face."

Even though he hadn't talked to Laiho in five years, Latvala was also shaken by Laiho's death. The two had been close friends, yet in his autobiography, *Chaos, Control & Guitar*, Laiho wrote that Latvala was fired because he wasn't interested in playing heavy music and could no longer play the songs right.

"That was bullshit," he says. "I don't know what happened. There were no fights or anything, but they kind of kicked me out in a bad manner and I just kept quiet about it. There were five years of radio silence after that."

Latvala didn't even know Laiho died until a few days later when a friend heard the news and called him. Today, Latvala chooses his words carefully. He doesn't want to downplay Laiho's importance as a figurehead of metal, yet he doesn't understand why he was kicked out of the band and he's frustrated he'll never be able to reconcile with his old friend.

"I had been close to Alexi for, like, 20 years, but people change," he says. "Maybe someone started manipulating him and brainwashed him. I don't know. But when it sunk into my mind that he was gone I started thinking, what the fuck? We could have made our differences up years before. It just shows how fragile life and friendship can be."

There are a few things everyone remembers about Laiho. He was completely dedicated to Bodom and proud of spearheading a band that combined elements of thrash, death metal, black metal glam and neo-classical. He was supportive to less-established musicians and gracious to fans. And lastly, he refused to take himself too seriously and was constantly goofing around and laughing onstage and off.

One of Latvala's favorite examples of Laiho's sense of humor dates back to the shoot for the video for COB's cover of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Lookin' Out My Back Door," from *Skeletons in the Closet*.

"In the CCR video for that song, everyone is looking really happy, so we did the same thing. We were all smiling and making goofy faces, and of course, that made us all laugh for real. It was pretty funny. The thing is, Alexi never wanted to be some kind of dark figure ghost monster onstage. It was more like a theatrical rock show, like a black metal orchestra. And it was fun to play like that. All these other bands at the time were trying to be evil all the time. Alexi loved metal and a lot of dark things as well, but playing music was fun for him, and he always liked to joke around."

Paint the Sky with Blood is out now via Napalm Records.



SOMETHING WILD

ALEXI LAIHO made two trips to *Guitar World*'s cover over the years; oddly enough, he was accompanied by ZAKK WYLDE both times. In the May 2005 issue, he joined the elite ranks of Wylde and STEVE VAI to "show you how to play the impossible!" Five years later, in the October 2010 issue, we checked in with Wylde and Laiho just before a colossal U.S. tour featuring Black Label Society and Children of Bodom.

FUTURE



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THIS VAN'S A-ROCKIN'

ON THE NEW

VAN WEEZER,

WEEZER'S **RIVERS CUOMO** OPENS UP A "PANDORA'S BOX OF EVIL GUITAR TOOLS" AND GOES CRAZY. BELOW, HE DISCUSSES HIS POST-EDDIE VAN HALEN SHRED INFLUENCES, EIGHTIES HAIR METAL AND WHY OZZY OSBOURNE HAD TO APPROVE ONE OF WEEZER'S NEW SONGS

[BY JOE BOSSO ⁄ PHOTOS BY KEVIN SCANLON]


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GIVEN THE FACT THAT WEEZER'S LATEST ALBUM IS called ***Van Weezer*** (this from a band that has famously fashioned its flying "W" logo after Van Halen's iconic "VH" wings), one might easily assume that the group's frontman, lead guitarist and songwriter, Rivers Cuomo, is an avowed fan of the late six-string legend and company. This is a notion that he immediately puts to rest.

"Honestly, I'm not the Van Halen guy in the band," he states emphatically. "I don't really know anything about them. I got seriously into music and guitar with the micro generation right after Van Halen, so that would've been Ratt, Mötley Crüe, Iron Maiden, Judas Priest and Metallica. The other guys in Weezer were all super into Van Halen."



Interesting. However, the album *is* called *Van Weezer*, so one might surmise that in some way, even tangentially, it's a tribute to Van Halen. Right? Cuomo chews on that for a second, and, without sounding the least bit coy, says, "Well, it could be Van Beethoven or Van Morrison. The first person I mentioned the record to said, 'Oh, it's a Beethoven reference.' The second person said, 'Oh, it's a Van Morrison reference.'" Finally, he owns up to it: "But you're right. It's a tip of the hat to probably the best-known band in the mainstream public consciousness to represent guitar shreddage."

Van Weezer is the band's second full-length release in 2021; earlier this year, the foursome (which also includes guitarist Brian Bell, bassist Scott Shriner and drummer Patrick Wilson) issued the transporting, orchestral-pop set *OK Human* (yes, its title is a winking nod to Radiohead's *OK Computer*). As it turns out, both albums were supposed to come out last year, but the COVID-19 pandemic threw a monkey wrench into Weezer's plans. "This is confusing even to me," Cuomo admits, "so let me figure this out. We started *OK Human* in 2018, and we were pretty much done. We started thinking about a release date and putting together a theater tour with an orchestra. Just then, our manager called and said, 'Great news. You guys just got booked on the Hella Mega Tour with Green Day and Fall Out Boy, and you're going to be rocking stadiums around the world."

Realizing that introspective, baroque pop wouldn't exactly go over on a stadium tour, the band quickly changed gears and threw themselves into *Van Weezer*. "We wanted to have a super-intense hard rock album so we could compete with the other bands we'd be playing with," Cuomo says. "We worked fast, and we even got the first single ["The End of the Game"] out on iTunes. And then the pandemic hit. The whole tour industry got shut down, the tour got bumped a year, and we realized it wouldn't make much sense to put out a big rock album when we couldn't even play."

He lets out a tired laugh and says, "At that point, we said, "All right, let's put *Van Weezer* on the shelf and dust off *OK Human*. It's a good quarantine album."

With sure signs that the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic might be in our rear-view mirrors (at the time of this writing, the Hella Mega Tour is back on the books for June), *Van Weezer* might be the perfect album for our times — the *anti*-quarantine record. For sheer, unadulterated, roll-down-the-windows-and-crank-it-loud fun, its 10 tight, super-rocking, action-packed tunes — most of which don't even crack the three-minute mark — deliver in spectacular fashion. With its shredtastic intro, smart-alecky guitar squawks and anthemic pop hooks, "The End of the Game" gave listeners a good idea of things to come, and the band ups the ante on fast-ball doozies like "Sheila Can Do It," "Beginning of the End" and "Hero."

Lyrically and sonically, the album is an affectionate, nostalgic look at Cuomo's formative, youthful rocking days during the Eighties: Amid squealing, twin-guitar leads, he recalls being "a little punk" listening to Aerosmith on the sing-along scorcher "I Need Some of That," and while detailing teenage rock dreams of glory in "Blue Dream," he lifts whole sections of Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" (including Randy Rhoads' iconic intro). Even on the disc's lone acoustic moment, the endearing set-closer "Precious Metal Girl," he lets his mind race back to the Aqua Net-coiffed, spandex-clad female fans who used to chase bands like Faster Pussycat and L.A. Guns on the Sunset Strip.

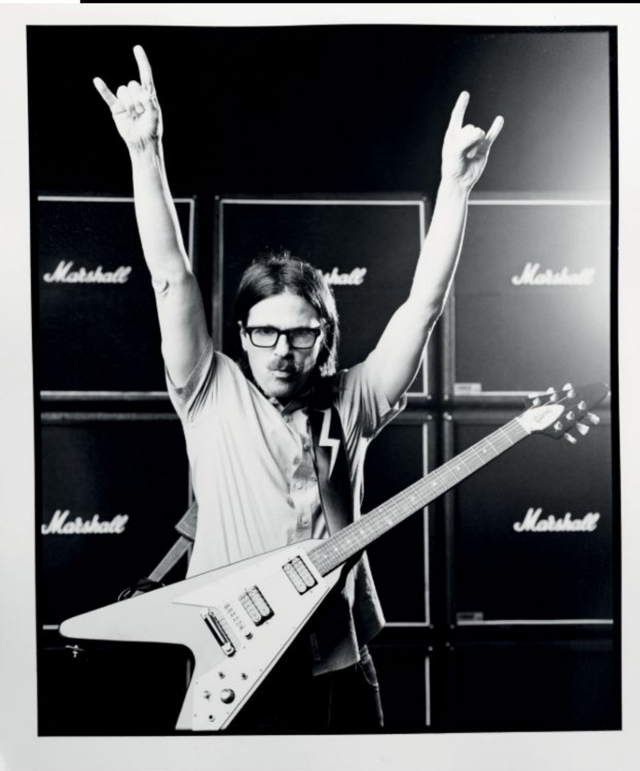
"Lyrically and musically, this takes us back to what we grew up playing," Cuomo says. "We suppressed these impulses for many years, so it was like coming home. It was a real joy to open up that Pandora's box of evil guitar tools and go crazy."

Evil guitar tools? Asked to elaborate, Cuomo explains, "Bar dives, two-handed tapping, artificial harmonics… It was like we had this intentional limitation of the colors on our palette. What's striking to me was a very conscious decision to not employ the majority of

Rivers Cuomo with the same Gibson Flying V he uses in the "Grapes of Wrath" music video



"I didn't get [tapping] from EDDIE [VAN HALEN], but from the guitarists he influenced. Definitely, whatever the COOL NEW GUITAR TRICK was, that's what I was learning"





Rivers Cuomo: "I think the moment I was converted to being a metal head ... was when I heard Quiet Riot's 'Metal Health' on the radio. That was when I started to feel this sense of identity and belonging to a community"

guitar techniques that were at our disposal when we made our first record. Since the time I was 13, I had practiced really hard to master all these guitar techniques, but at a certain point the scene in L.A. decided that stuff wasn't cool anymore. So it was like we pretended we don't know how to do any of that — there's not a single palm mute or any of those other techniques on our first album. And these are all things that I could do very well and had done in all my other bands up until that point."

While acknowledging that *Van Weezer* has a decided thematic focus, Cuomo points out that making a concept album was the last thing on his mind. "This is what we do now — we make very thematically tight albums," he says. "Each album creates its own little world, but I think if we called it a concept album, people would get the wrong idea. They'd think there was a plot and a story and characters, and it's not that type of record."

At 50, Cuomo is now firmly ensconced in middle age, but he reveals that harkening back to his youth while writing the new record came easily. "It's interesting... My perception of time keeps getting distorted the older I get," he says. "My twenties, that was a good decade there. After that, the thirties, and forties and beyond, it all becomes a blur. I still feel quite connected to my teens. Those are the formative years, and they're still right there inside of me."

Let's go back to your introduction to hard rock and heavy metal. What was the first band that hit you?

I think the moment I was converted to being a metal head, when it really became more than just music, was when I heard Quiet Riot's "Metal Health" on the radio. That was when I started to feel this sense of identity and belonging to a community.

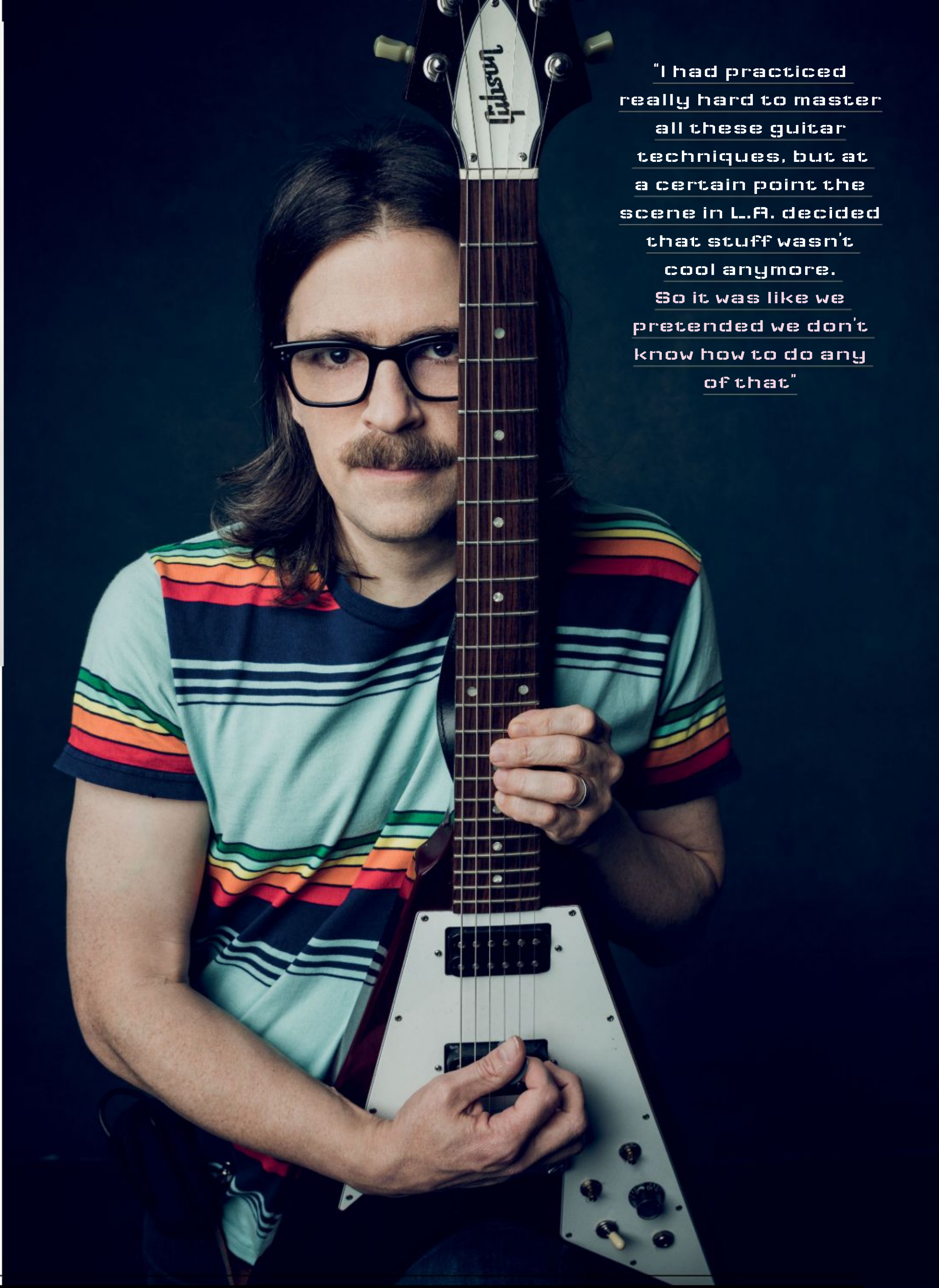
Were you already playing the guitar?

I had a drum set. My brother got a guitar, and I noodled a bit. But right after I heard Quiet Riot, for my eighth-grade class night, there was a group of boys who put together a band, and they covered "Metal Health." They played the opening riff, and the singer slid across the stage on his knees while screaming. I couldn't believe kids just like me, my age, got these instruments and were making this sound. It was so exciting. Within a few weeks, I got a white Yamaha Strat copy. That was for my 14th birthday, and I just started practicing and practicing.

Were you a natural on the guitar? Was it arduous?

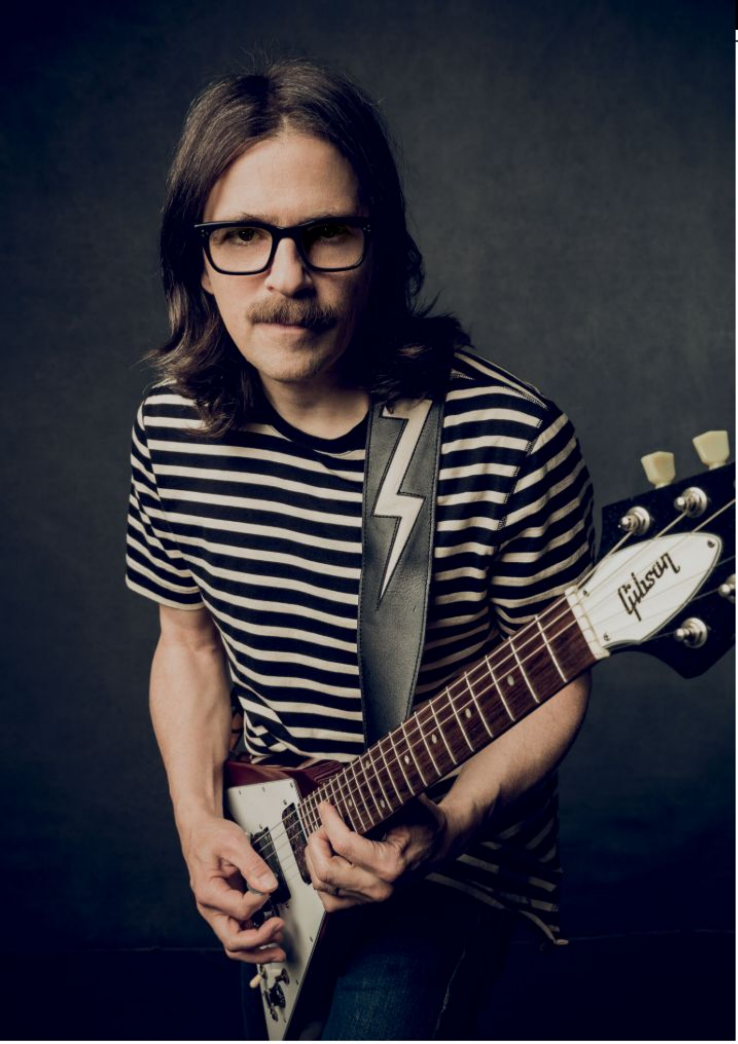
It was frustrating at first, because there were so few resources back then. There was obviously no internet, and even songbooks — I got a Kiss songbook, but it was for piano and vocal. They had chord diagrams so you could strum an acoustic guitar, but I was trying to play the "Cold Gin" riff, and it didn't sound right.

On the other hand, nobody had anything else to do, so it was easy to get some friends and form a band in a shack over at my friend's house. We'd play "Cold Gin" over and over, and we gradually figured it out. We learned by ear. Over the course of high school, I got pretty good at the





"I had practiced really hard to master all these guitar techniques, but at a certain point the scene in L.A. decided that stuff wasn't cool anymore. So it was like we pretended we don't know how to do any of that"



Rivers Cuomo: "In another reality, it might be interesting to hear [Ozzy Osbourne] singing 'Hash Pipe'"

heavy metal thing, and I went to Berklee School of Music for a summer program.

You must've had your chops together to be accepted.
Well, it wasn't Berklee proper. It was a five-week summer program for high school kids. I don't remember how selective it was, but I was pretty good.

Who were your main guitar heroes at this point?
The first one was Ace Frehley. I learned all the Kiss songs, and my first band was a Kiss cover band called Fury. With my 14-year-old logic, I thought I could make it as a musician playing somebody else's songs. I just thought we were going to be Kiss, but called Fury, and that we'd make it somehow. And then I had another band called Warlock, and we did Priest and Maiden, Mötley Crüe — everything that was popular in the early and mid Eighties.

I also have to give due credit to the later metal bands. I got into a Metallica cover band, a Fates Warning cover band. I got into Yngwie Malmsteen and a band called Cacophony that featured Jason Becker and Marty Friedman. I just loved that so much, so that's where my head was at when I moved from Connecticut to L.A., right after high school. My band hit the Sunset Strip, and we were like, "All right, we're going to take this place over, because we shred like nobody else!"

I assume you mastered tapping. Thanks to Van Halen, it was *de rigueur*.
Yeah. I didn't get it from Eddie, but from the guitarists he influenced. Definitely, whatever the cool new guitar trick was, that's what I was learning. At the time, it felt like it was really hard. I remember my fingers hurt from all the practice, but it all seemed to happen within a couple of years. I was thinking, "I'm pretty hot on guitar," which is kind of funny.

There was a decided macho and sexist element to hard rock and metal in the Eighties. Guys were wearing leather, and the videos featured women in strip clubs. All of which doesn't seem like you, certainly not at that age.
I don't know... I think the whole gender thing in metal is pretty complicated. I don't think it's as simple as metal being macho or uber-masculine, because I think quite a lot of it was hyper feminine, with the long hair, makeup and glam. I remember we all thought being really skinny and not built was cool. If you were muscular, it was like, "Ew, that's not cool." It's complicated, and I don't have the gender studies background to understand it.

If I can attempt to draw a parallel between you and Eddie Van Halen, it seems that while your high school friends were out partying, the two of you spent a lot of time practicing alone. Fair comparison?
Yes, except I had great friends, and we were all in the same boat together. We were all learning together, and there were so many musicians in my school trading ideas. I definitely didn't feel like a loner in my work as a musician.

Eddie was a pioneer in guitar construction. He made modding guitars very popular. Did you do any of that?
No, I didn't, and I have never had any kind of technical skill or interest around anything mechanical. My brain doesn't go there. I've thought about that recently, because in the last five years, I've discovered this incredible enthusiasm and knack for computer programming. It's not a physical object, but it's a lot of modding other people's scripts, and I just love it. But put a physical object in front of me, and I'm pretty much useless. I can't even figure out the TV remote control.

{*continued on page 52*}

WEEZER'S VAN HALEN FANBOY

Drummer PATRICK WILSON on meeting Eddie and designing that familiar-looking Weezer logo

Word has it you're the *real* Van Halen fan in the band.
I am 100 percent the biggest Van Halen fan in the band. I love Van Halen, especially Eddie's insane playing.

Did you ever meet any of the Van Halen members?
I was fortunate enough to meet Ed. He came to the Forum in L.A. when we played there in 2010. There have only been two people I ever got nervous about meeting: One was Gary Numan, of all people [*Laughs*], and the other was Ed. He came back to say hi, and he was just very cool. I was like, "Holy shit, it's Eddie Van Halen!" I look back on it now and can laugh about it, but I gushed all over him. I was so dumb.

Was he a Weezer fan? Did he say he liked your show?
No. He said, "My son likes your band." [*Laughs*] That was great. Interestingly, he spent the whole time talking about his son and what a great musician he was. I thought that was cool.

When did you discover Van Halen? Were you a guitar player at first?
No, I didn't play guitar. I was banging on my friends' drum kits, but I didn't get one till much later. I first heard Van Halen on their debut album in 1978, so I was nine years old. I was on board right away. Those opening songs, "Runnin' with the Devil" into "Eruption" — I mean, forget it. [*Laughs*]
I have an older sister who was pretty churchy at the time. She came into my room — "What is that song you're playing?" And I go, "Runnin' with the *Devil*!" She stomped out, super offended. It was pretty funny.
My first concert was Van Halen — 1984 at Buffalo



BRIAN'S SONG

Weezer guitarist **Brian Bell** talks *Van Weezer*, guitars and poser metal

Was *Van Weezer* as much fun to make as it sounds?
It is a fun record, isn't it? It'll be a party to play. As far as making it… it wasn't a party, that's for sure. [*Laughs*] Working is our way of partying. A lot of it was recorded during the pandemic, so just to have an excuse to get out of the house and go to the recording studio was certainly welcome. I was so thankful to be productive during that time. We were also recording *OK Human* at the same time, so I had to juggle that. *Van Weezer* was electric, *OK Human* was acoustic.

How would you describe your guitar relationship with Rivers?
Rivers is a shredder. He can tear your head off with blistering speed, but he also has this tasteful, Brian May-ish gift for melody. Coming from a piano background, my style is unorthodox. I started playing classical guitar, so I have a picking ability that fits in with Weezer. I think I bring some interesting chord voicings to the music. I'm really good at coming up with what's needed. Because Rivers is singing, I try to think of what is needed under his voice.

Are the two of you big jammers?
Mmm… not really. We do have some jam moments in rehearsal. It's funny — when I joined the band, we would jam a bit, and I would say, "That was some of the best music I ever heard *and* some of the worst!" [*Laughs*] I wish we would do more of that now. Mostly, we try to woodshed and come up with ideas, and I do enjoy that. There's some jamming involved with that process. I present ideas to the producer and say, "Pick what you like. I know they all work." There's nothing sexy about how this happens; it's a lot of perspiration.

Van Halen is sort of a motif for *Van Weezer*. Where does that band sit in your roots?
I'll get flack for this, but growing up, I wasn't a big fan. Now I really appreciate them. Those were some great songs, and what's not to appreciate about Van Halen's guitar playing? I heard this Van Halen cover album by the Bird and the Bee, and the chord progressions in "Jamie's Cryin'" were fantastic. But when I was younger, I didn't think Van Halen were metal. I was more into Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden and Dio. When we started this record, I thought, "I want to bring some Maiden into this." Not that you hear any of that. It was more of a love for metal in general.

A lot of Rivers' lyrics on *Van Weezer* harken back to the Eighties rock scene on the Sunset Strip. Was that part of your world?
No, not really. When I came to L.A, I liked Slayer and Metallica. I thought hair metal was poser music and really kind of lame. Guys in spandex seemed really silly to me. The Sunset Strip stuff, like Warrant and Faster Pussycat… oh, God. You could look at it with nostalgia, but that was crap to me. It took Nirvana to make that scene go away, pretty much overnight.

Between you and Rivers, which metal bands meet with your agreement?
A lot of them. For guitar virtuosity, certainly Yngwie Malmsteen, Slayer and Fates Warning. Rivers loves Fates Warning. I mean, he knew those guys from his hometown in Connecticut. When I heard that, I said, "Fuck. I'm in the right goddamned band!" [*Laughs*]

Do you guys disagree about any metal bands?
Well, it's not metal, but for all I know, he was probably into the songwriting of Cinderella. My main concern was, "Is it Satanic or not?" The more Satanic, the better. [*Laughs*] The good thing about hair metal bands was the ballads. Everybody had those power ballads. Rivers has an interesting pop sensibility, even in the metal-ness of him. I can appreciate a good song now, but at the time when that stuff was happening, I just didn't care about any of that.

What were your main guitars for *Van Weezer*?
I was armed with great guitars. I recently purchased my dream guitar, a 1958 Gibson Les Paul Custom. I also bought a '58 Strat. Between the two, there was no need to plug into any silly pedals and ruin their sound with signal loss. I have an early Sixties SG that I've been using for a while. It's a great lead instrument. I mainly used the Les Paul for unison lines and filler parts.
— *Joe Bosso*

SEAN MURPHY

Memorial Auditorium — the last one tour with the original band. I was pretty much with them through *5150*; by the time I got to L.A., I started to get into other stuff. But I'll always love Van Halen. I crank *Women and Children First* all the time. My 13-year-old son, Ian, plays "Romeo Delight" on the guitar. That just brings a tear to my eye. His older brother, Charlie, plays bass, drums and guitar. They're both into it.

Is *Women and Children First* is your favorite Van Halen record?
For sure. That record sounds like it was recorded in an afternoon while they were having a party, which probably isn't far from the truth. But I do like *Fair Warning* a lot, too. They're both epic.

How did you come to design the Weezer logo as an homage to Van Halen?
I used to draw the Van Halen logo on my notebooks all the time, so I just thought, "Why not make a 'W' with wings? Karl, our longtime friend and archivist, messed around with it and fixed it up. But yeah, I pretty much ripped off Van Halen. In his book, [onetime Van Halen tour manager] Noel Monk says they ripped it off from a Jimi Hendrix poster. If we made a huge deal about it, maybe we would have heard from the suits, but so many people do that kind of thing.

In addition to drums, you do play guitar. How good are you at Van Halen songs?
I mean, you can try to play the notes correctly, but you just won't get there. Eddie had such feel and swing. The way he played with his brother was so special. It was joyous. So I can play some Van Halen songs, but I can't do them like Eddie. Who can?
— Joe Bosso

THIS VAN'S A-ROCKIN'

continued from page 50

At a certain point, you switched gears from metal. You got into the Beatles and the Beach Boys. I understand that the Pixies also made a big impression on you.
When my band got to L.A., the Sunset Strip was in the midst of the Guns N' Roses phase. Everybody was trying to figure out who was the next Guns N' Roses, and nobody knew what to make of us. We couldn't get off the ground, and most of the guys in my band went back to Connecticut. I got a job at Tower Records, and while working there I was exposed to all kinds of music.

The people there schooled me. They'd put on *Pet Sounds*, the Pixies, Sonic Youth… At first, it just sounded like a bunch of painful noise. Coming from my metal background, I didn't know what to make of it, but over the course of 40 hours a week, week after week, I was like, "Oh, this is kind of great. I kind of dig this." My focus shifted from "How clearly can I play these harmonic minor scales and sweep arpeggios?" to "How catchy can I make a chorus?" Or "How emotionally honest can this verse be?" It was still the same focus on intense achievement, but now my trade was as a writer than a shredder.

It was a real growth period.
It was. But also, let me talk about singing. Even in my early days, I sang. I sang in the Kiss cover band. I sang in the school chorus, in a barbershop quartet, in madrigals. I loved singing, but I didn't think of myself as a deep singer. I couldn't hit the high notes like Geoff Tate from Queensrÿche or Rob Halford from Judas Priest. I just didn't think I could sing like that. In my serious metal bands, I was never the singer; I just thought of myself as a guitar player. But as I was exposed to all these alternative bands while working at Tower Records, I started to realize it wasn't so much about how high or how powerful you could sing. It was more like, "Do you have something to say?"

When Weezer started, that's when I really became a lead singer, because I realized I didn't have to try to *be* like a lead singer. I could just be my normal self and sing like I did in choir. After that, it was quite easy. And the best training for a singer is to play shows, so we did that all the time. We played show after show in clubs.

Let's get into *Van Weezer*. "The End of the Game" starts off with some tapping that sounds very Eddie-esque, though you'll probably disagree.
Actually, I was trying to emulate AC/DC's "Thunderstruck." It's not even tapping, I don't think. I was just like, "How can I do something like that?" So I pulled out the first technique that sounded somewhat like that. I think that's how it came out. I really like that harmonized tapping, and I also like the bar dive on the double artificial harmonic. [*Editor's note: "The End of the Game" was transcribed in the September 2020 issue of* Guitar World.]

The rhythm patterns are really forceful.
That's got to be from Ratt, I think.

Warren DeMartini — he's quite underrated.
Yeah. I mean, I have no idea how any of those records were made. It was before I knew how to research that stuff. But definitely, so much of my technique is from learning Ratt songs or even the Scorpions.

"I Need Some of That" is such a sweet look at youthful rocking. You namecheck Aerosmith and sing about plugging into a Marshall stack…
That one's tough for me, because, man, we wrote so many versions of it and had so many different lyrics. I'm pretty sure I was thinking about those days at the shack at my best friend Justin's house. That's where we used to practice all the time.

What's going on in "Blue Dream"? The riff, and even the drums and the verse chords — that's "Crazy Train" by Ozzy Osbourne.
[*Laughs*] Pretty similar.

I'll say. Did you have to split the songwriting?
Yeah. They get half the song or something like that. It's kind of like a sample, really, but we played it.

How did it come about? Were you playing "Crazy Train" and you thought, "I'm going to write a song around that"?
The song existed with another riff. The song was good, but the riff was… It was OK, but it wasn't the greatest guitar riff of all time, which I felt like it should be. Coincidentally, at the same time, our manager said, "Hey, you guys should sample the 'Crazy Train' riff in a song." I know he was thinking: "What's going to get people talking? What is going to confuse the internet?" He had no idea what I was making, but it just seemed to me like the perfect suggestion. So we tried it. The tempo fit, and it all just seemed to come together.

Did you ever hear a reaction from Ozzy?
They approved it, so I'm assuming he heard it. I don't know what their approval process is, but I didn't get a specific reaction. That's not the first time we contacted Ozzy. Actually, once, I think it was in 2000, he asked if I had any songs for him, and I just happened to have written "Hash Pipe." I sent it to him, but he didn't end up using it. In another reality, it might be interesting to hear him singing that song.

We haven't really talked about thrash metal. "One More Hit" has a section that's pretty doomsday and thrash-like.
That dissonant Slayer mosh riff was a satisfying moment. That's an itch I haven't been able to scratch in all previous years of Weezer's history. I

went through a huge Slayer phase. I remember right around the time I was learning to drive my parents' Toyota Tercel, I'd drive up and down the driveway blasting *Reign in Blood*. We had a short driveway, so I'd turn around and come back — over and over, just gunning the car. That record was exactly what I needed in my junior and senior years of high school. It had a lot of aggression.

Nothing feminine about *Reign in Blood*.
[*Laughs*] No. Not a lot of hairspray and makeup on that album.

Speaking of hairspray, on "Precious Metal Girl" you do a beautiful acoustic love letter to the women on the Sunset Strip in the Eighties.
Yeah. They were really special. I don't know if those girls exist anymore, but I have good memories of the smell of the hairspray and the makeup. They're just great inspirations.

You namecheck some of the mid-level bands of that era — Faster Pussycat, L.A. Guns. Were you a fan?
I was more into the girls that were into them.

[*Laughs*] I see. I want to ask you about Suzy Shinn. She had been your engineer on a few records, but on *Van Weezer* she makes her production debut.
You know, I'm very resistant to new people around me, especially when I'm singing or writing in a very deep space. I need familiar surroundings. When I first met Suzy, we were making the "White Album." I went to a session and was going to finish writing "California Kids." I was there with [producer] Jake Sinclair, whom I was really excited to work with. Suzy was in the room, sitting behind a desk, and I was immediately thrown off my game. Not only was some random person there, but she was this young woman. I was like, "How am I supposed to operate here? This is not cool, Jake." But she had the perfect temperament. She was very laid back and unobtrusive, but at the same time she worked really hard. As I got more comfortable with her, she started pushing me more than any producer ever did. So I got dependent on that, and every time I had to sing, I would ask her to basically produce my vocals. After a while, it just seemed like, "Why not have her do the whole record?"

What were your *Van Weezer* guitars?
We started with the idea to pull out some of the guitars from that era and get some of those sounds, but then we realized the album is called *Van Weezer,* so you've got to have as much Weezer as you do Van. So we made sure the meat and bones of the album were straight-up, classic Weezer sounding. I used the Les Paul Junior that I got from Ric Ocasek and played on our first album. I used the same Boogie amp, too. I think it all sounds like classic Weezer.

How about your Warmoth Strat copies?
I never use those on records. They sound good on stage, but they can't compare to the Les Paul in the studio.

Anything else?
There was some Explorer and other guitars. But then we'd send out for guitars. It was like, "We need an absurd guitar with a whammy bar on it," so we'd sound out to Truetone in Santa Monica or to Lon Cohen Studio Rentals — "Send us a crazy guitar." The studio quickly turned into Guitar Center, with all this mad shredding going on. It was super fun. GW



PAPER LOVES TREES

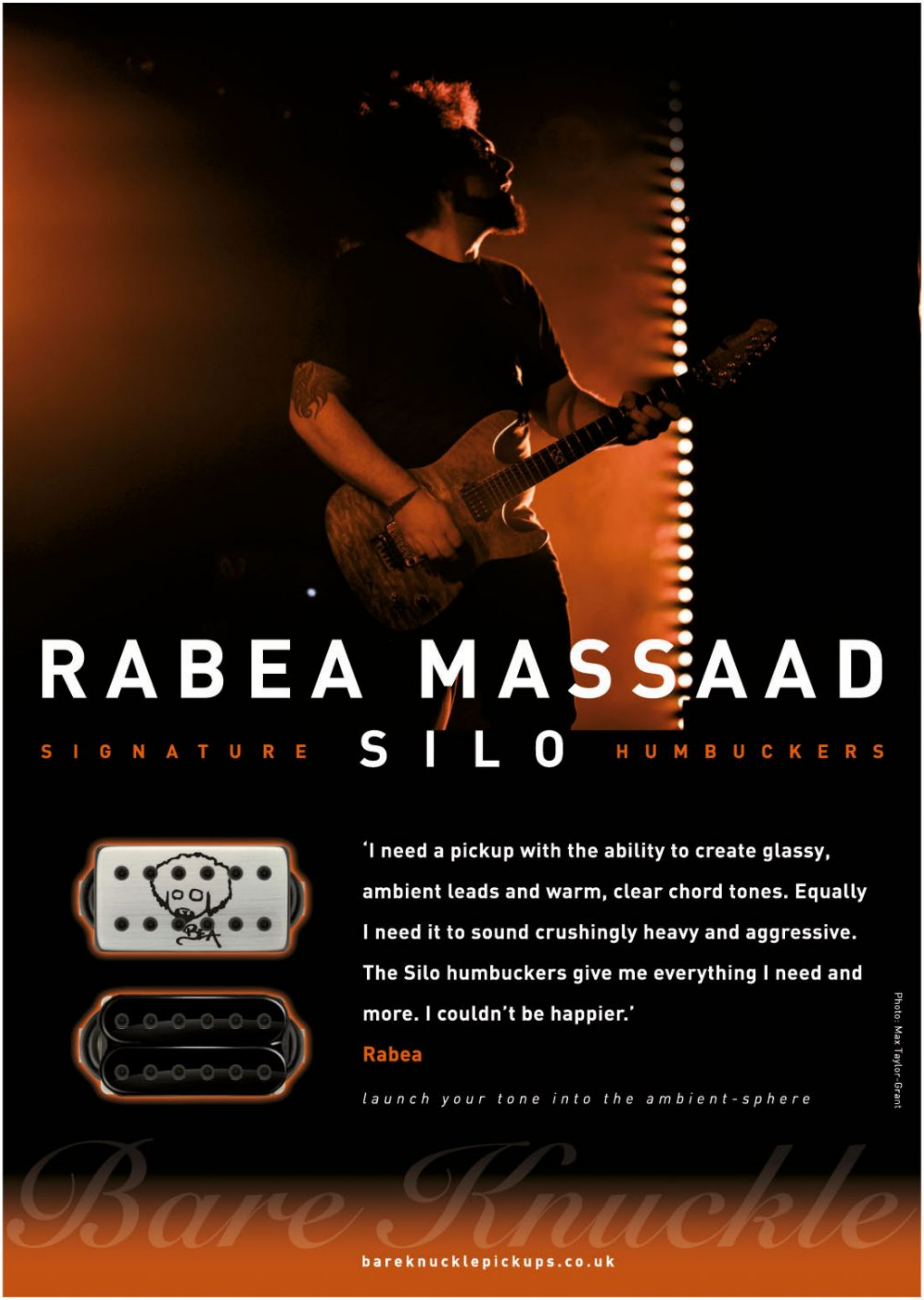
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OVERLOOKED, UNDERRATED, SIDELINED AND DOWNPLAYED SIXTIES GUITAR HEROES
PART 3: ERNEST RANGLIN

ALL HAIL THE KING OF SKA GUITAR!

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JAMAICAN GUITAR LEGEND ERNEST RANGLIN

By Alan di Perna



Ernest Ranglin (with a Gibson ES-339) performs at the WOMAD Festival in the U.K., July 27, 2008

DARREN COLEMAN/PHOTOSHOT/GETTY IMAGES

RANGLIN

LEGEND HAS IT THAT THE GENRE NAME "SKA" — JAMAICA'S MID-SIXTIES PRECURSOR TO REGGAE — WAS COINED TO DESCRIBE THE SOUND OF ERNEST RANGLIN'S GUITAR. WHEN I INTERVIEWED THE SEMINAL JAMAICAN GUITARIST IN 1997, HE HAD THIS TO SAY ON THE MATTER:

"I invented the music, but not the word. And even reggae — I didn't invent that word either, but I invented the music."

To someone unaware of Ranglin's immense contribution to the history of Jamaican music, this statement might seem boastful. But if you dive deep into the island's formidable musical legacy, you'll find the compelling rhythmic skank and muted-string poetry of Ranglin's guitar on countless landmark tracks. He has worked with many of the greats — Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, Toots and the Maytals, Burning Spear, Jimmy Cliff, Desmond Dekker, the Melodians, the Gladiators and numerous others. He was the first-call session guitarist and arranger for all the key producers who shaped Jamaica's trifecta of popular music genres — ska, rock steady and reggae — Clement "Sir Coxsone" Dodd, Prince Buster, Lee "Scratch" Perry and Island Records chief Chris Blackwell.

When you consider the numerous ska revivals that have taken place worldwide since the Sixties, and also factor in reggae's tremendous influence on rock music, it's an inevitable conclusion that a legion of guitarists owe a stylistic debt of gratitude to Ranglin. The Specials, the Selector, Madness, the Clash, the Police, the Slits, the Ruts, Rancid, No Doubt, the Slackers, Hep Cat, the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, Reel Big Fish, Sublime... the list goes on and on. All these groups and more can trace some portion of their guitar aesthetic back to Ranglin's pioneering work.

Ironically, though, Ranglin's first love is jazz. That's the music he started out playing and has returned to over the years. "I was really an ear player at the beginning," he told me. "I didn't really start to study the instrument professionally until I was 14. I used to like to listen to Louis Jordan, Erskine Hawkins, Bill Doggett and people like those. But I would also hear Lionel Hampton, and that's where I started to hear Charlie Christian and Benny Goodman and those people. When I was a little older, about 15, I began to play in big bands. They would make stock arrangements of their recordings, so we could play just what they did."

Ranglin and his contemporaries played the kind of gigs available to Jamaican musicians back then — hotels and cruise ships. It was music for the island's predominantly white tourist trade, for the most part. This influence — a "tropical," Latin-tinged, mid-century cocktail jazz vibe — can be heard on a record that Ranglin played on in 1959: *Lance Heywood at the Half Moon Hotel*. It was the debut release from Island Records — a modest beginning for the legendary label that would bring reggae greats like Bob Marley, Burning Spear and Black Uhuru to international acclaim in the Seventies.

Ranglin and Island chief Chris Blackwell became close musical collaborators. Island's second release, in 1960, was Ranglin's solo debut album, *Guitar in Ernest*, a set of jazzy instrumentals that showcase some of Ranglin's nimble fretwork. By this point, he'd also embarked on a busy career as a session guitarist and arranger, first at Federal Recording Studios in Kingston and then at the Jamaica Broadcasting Company (JBC) Studios. It was during his time at Federal that he met and began working with another legendary figure in Jamaican music, the aforementioned gun-toting, visionary record producer/entrepreneur Clement "Sir Coxsone" Dodd.

Dodd is the man who signed Bob Marley, as part of the vocal group the Wailers, to his Studio One record label in 1963. Marley and his fellow Wailers — whose ranks also included Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer — joined a growing roster of artists on Dodd's Studio One record label. As Studio One's house arranger, Ranglin anchored the studio group, the Skatalites, that accompanied Marley and the Wailers on their debut Studio One single, "Simmer Down," backed with "It Hurts to Be Alone." Marley had previously released a few singles as a solo artist on another label, Beverley's. But they had met with only modest success. This first session with Dodd and Ranglin would yield a far more satisfactory result. Ranglin told me he could immediately sense Marley's enormous potential; the two would work together again.

"I can say, right from that first time, Bob was a very studious guy. He knew where every guy was going to sing their harmonies. They had to have the notes right. Bob was very serious about it. I could see he was going to be a star."

One side of the Wailers' debut single for Coxsone's label was the doo-wop influenced ballad, "It Hurts to Be Alone," featuring some lyrical guitar embellishments by Ranglin. It was the flip side, however, which proved to be the money shot. "Simmer Down" has become an anthem and a ska classic. A plea for non-violence addressed Jamaica's sharp-dressed, razor-wielding "rude boys," the song's irresistibly danceable rhythm was then sweeping Jamaica and would soon enthrall the whole world.

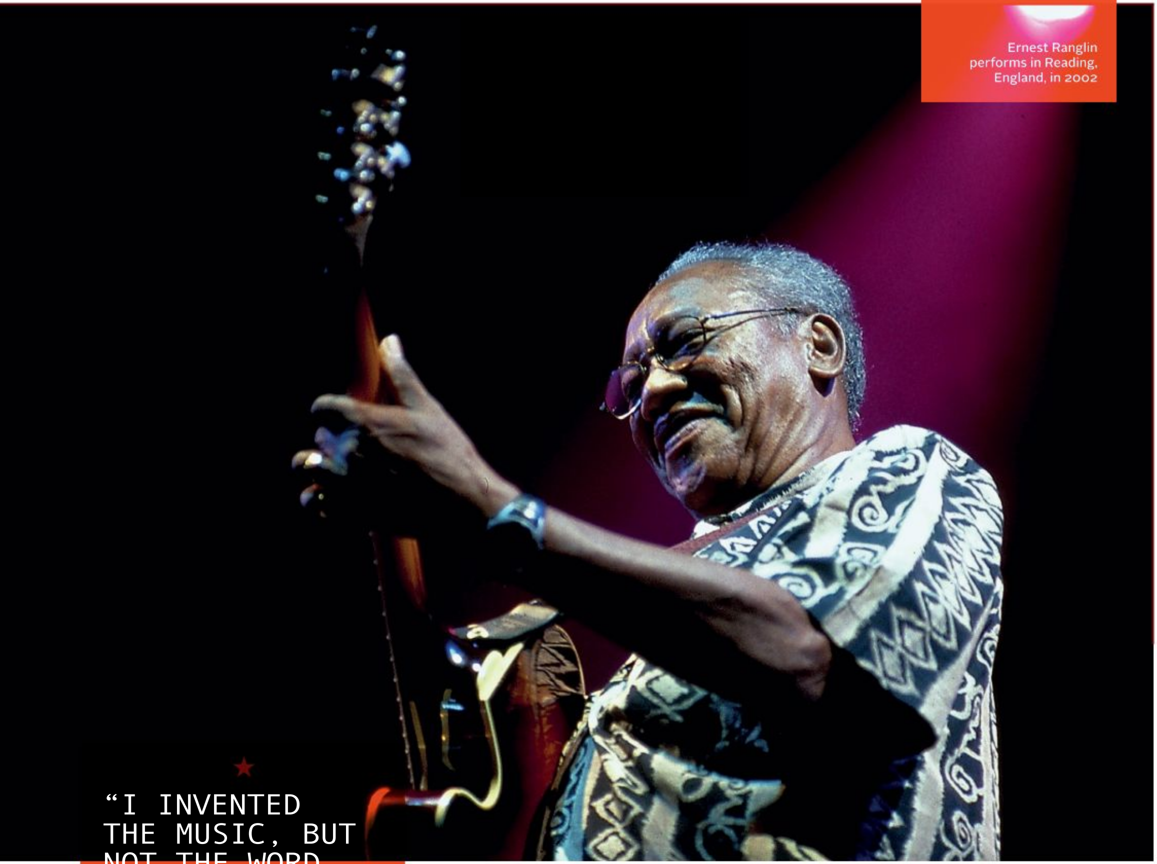
It was called ska. The rhythm had been brewing a while in a Jamaica newly liberated from British rule. It was fueled by American R&B sounds blowing over the Gulf of Mexico from New Orleans radio stations, which Jamaicans could pick up on a brand new invention of the day — the transistor radio. From boogie-woogie, pioneering Jamaican musicians like Ranglin adopted what would become one of ska's defining characteristics: eighth note accentuations on the offbeats of a 4/4 measure. You can hear the boogie-woogie influence clearly on an early track like Laurel Aitken's "Boogie in my Bones" from 1959.

But the Jamaican players imparted a uniquely Caribbean swing to the rhythm. The two and four beats were stated more emphatically. The drummer's kick and snare would often mash down the two and four together, rather than playing on alternate beats as in many other pop music styles.

"It's a shuffle," Ranglin explained. "Same thing they used to play in boogie-woogie. The only thing is we emphasized those beats a little more. That was the only trick."

On many early ska tracks, brass instruments would play the eighth note offbeats. But the role is really tailor-made for an electric guitar. Scraping a pick across six strings, you can create a wealth of rhythmic nuances and ornamental fillips. Ernest Ranglin is the great originator of that whole rhythmic vocabulary — one that he helped pass down to many guitarists in Jamaica and worldwide.

As part of his duties as Studio One's house arranger, Ranglin also put together the legendary ensemble whose very name is synonymous with this style of Jamaican music — the Skatalites. By the time they formed in 1964, most of the players had already worked together live, backing mento (Jamaican calypso) singer Lord Tanamo. So it was a natural choice for Ranglin to call on these musicians when Coxsone came to him with a big project.



Ernest Ranglin performs in Reading, England, in 2002

“I INVENTED THE MUSIC, BUT NOT THE WORD [SKA]. AND EVEN REGGAE — I DIDN’T INVENT THAT WORD, BUT I INVENTED THE MUSIC”



JON LUSK/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

“There was a young singer from Trinidad by the name of Jackie Opel,” Ranglin related, “and Coxsone asked me to do an LP for him. So I got this band together. And when the LP was finished, I say, ‘Why not just keep this band?’ Because they had a nice thing going.”

Ranglin was a particularly close friend and mentor to Skatalites saxophonist Roland Alphonso. An educator as well as musician, Ranglin played a role in developing the fluid, playful, beguiling style that became Alphonso’s signature mode of soloing within the Skatalites.

“Roland came from military school,” Ranglin explained. “And they only played classic marches and semi-classic things. So when he came out, he didn’t know anything about jazz, swing ... whatever it was called. At the time, I was a big fan of Charlie Parker and [Roland] was an alto player like Charlie. That’s where I gave him a styling and gave him ideas. I gave him harmony lessons and showed him what to do — styling, you know. He was a good [music] reader, because he came out of school learning to read. So I could always write things out for him. We were always together, from young boys, you know.”

The Skatalites lineup was somewhat fluid. But, along with Ranglin and Alphonso, the core, classic members included reedmen Tommy McCook and Lester Sterling, trombonist Don Drummond, trumpeter Johnnie Moore, pianist Jackie Mittoo, bassist Lloyd Brevett and drummer Lloyd Knibb. Concurrently with their duties as the Studio One house band, the Skatalites recorded and performed as an instrumental group in their own right. Their original compositions and wry covers of American television and film music themes — “Bonanza,” “Guns of Navarone” — became huge favorites in Jamaica.

As studio session groups go, the Skatalites rank right up there with the Funk Brothers, who played on countless Motown hits,

ACID INCENSE AND FUZZ

OVERLOOKED, UNDERRATED, SIDELINED AND DOWNPLAYED SIXTIES GUITAR HEROES

PART 3: ERNEST RANGLIN

and the Wrecking Crew, who played on hits produced by Phil Spector, Brian Wilson, Lou Adler and others who defined the pop sound of the Sixties. Coxsone's house band was a tight, disciplined and creative unit that could nail a track in just a single take. At Studio One, the work pace was frenetic, and sometimes interrupted by bouts of gunplay in the control room. This is something else Coxsone had in common with Phil Spector.

"With Coxsone, we could turn out at least six tunes a day," Ranglin told me. "Sometimes we'd do everything [i.e., vocals and instruments] together, and other times we'd do the tracks first and the vocals after."

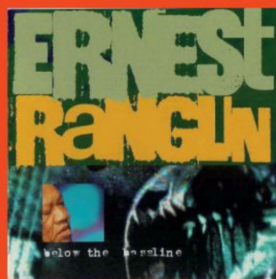
Even with his busy schedule at Studio One, Ranglin still found time to work for other producers. Owing to contractual ties to Federal and other studios, he often had to do this on the sly. He became the first person to play electric bass — rather than the more standard, at the time, double bass — on sessions for Prince Buster, thus setting the stage for future Jamaican electric bass greats like Aston "Family Man" Barrett, Errol "Flabba" Holt and Robbie Shakespeare. On these moonlighting gigs, he sometimes strove to sound as little like Ernest Ranglin as possible, and of course to suffer the suppression of his name in the credits.

"Many times I had to disguise my playing," he recalled. "I had to try not to let people, like Federal, know that I am playing. Even certain times when I used to play for Coxsone, my name was El Pancho. Most of the times, when I was at Federal, they didn't want me to play too much guitar on people's tunes. So I had to be a bass player. And whenever I had to do the ska on guitar, I could only ska [i.e. play rhythm]. I couldn't play solos, because I was restricted by Federal records."

Despite this prodigious and sometimes thankless work load, Ranglin was hardly becoming a rich man. "Oh well, the pay was not even good to mention," he laughed darkly when I raised the topic of money. "Those are sad memories when it comes to pay."

Perhaps this is why Ranglin accepted Chris Blackwell's offer to go to London in 1964 and work as an arranger for Island Records there, bequeathing his seat in the Skatalites to his guitar student Jah Jerry Hines. At the time, many Jamaicans and other West Indians were migrating to England — a cultural phenomenon recently depicted by filmmaker Steve McQueen in his *Small Axe* series for Netflix. Ska was "hotting up" as the music of London's West Indian youth community, and also catching on with the primarily white mod culture then coming to the fore. Even the Beatles

"IT'S A SHUFFLE — THE SAME THING THEY USED TO PLAY IN BOOGIE-WOOGIE. THE ONLY THING IS WE EMPHASIZED THOSE BEATS A LITTLE MORE. THAT WAS THE ONLY TRICK"



imported a touch of bluebeat — as ska was also known — into the middle eight guitar solo on their 1964 track "I Call Your Name."

Ranglin became the arranger and guitarist on the first worldwide ska hit, Jamaican singer Millie Small's version of the American R&B song "My Boy Lollipop." It was the first time ska was heard in the United States and many other places. The record would go on to sell some seven million copies.

"One of the amazing things about it, Ranglin recalled, "was that the only Jamaican musician on that recording, apart from myself, was a trumpeter named Pete Peterson. Everybody else was from England or wherever on that side [i.e., Europe]. And they didn't know anything about this music. But if you can read music, you don't need a whole lot of explanation — as long as you're a good musician. It was a little awkward for the pianist, I would say. But everybody seemed to fall in line."

During the ten months he spent in London, Ranglin also worked with jazz artists Cannonball Adderley and became a regular at the city's top jazz club, Ronnie Scott's, where he reportedly impressed the likes of Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton and John McLaughlin. It's tempting to speculate where Ranglin's career might have gone had he stayed in England longer. But he had to return to Jamaica to be with his two young sons.

"I guess this was a big sacrifice in my life," he told me. "But I had to do that because, after all, your children come first."

On his return to Jamaica, Ranglin discovered that ska had started to give way to the slower cadences of rock steady, which would eventually transform into the deep, heavy pulse of reggae. He made his mark in these genres as well. In fact some of his greatest work dates from this period. Ranglin's chunky, palm muted, low-string riffs, played on archtop Gibsons for the most part, are the engine that drives classics like the Ethiopians' "Train to Skaville" (1967), Toots and the Maytals "54-46 That's My Number" (1968) and the Melodians' "Rivers of Babylon" (1970). These are some of the foundation "riddims" of Jamaica's musical heritage — sampled, remixed and revoiced by countless artists in the years since then.

As reggae became a massive worldwide phenomenon in the Seventies, Ranglin continued to work with some of the genre's foremost artists, including Jimmy Cliff, the Gladiators and the Congos. But he also began to devote more time and energy to jazz, gigging and recording often with Jamaican pianist Monty Alexander. In 1996, Ranglin's album *Below the Bassline* became the debut release on Chris Blackwell's then-new Island Jamaica Jazz label. In recent years, Ranglin has been awarded an honorary doctorate in music from the University of the West Indies and was inducted into the Jamaican Music Hall of Fame. In 2016 he announced his retirement, leading an ensemble comprised of top players from Nigeria, Senegal, England and the U.S. on a farewell tour.

When I spoke with Ranglin in '97, we were in the midst of another ska revival, with young bands like the Slackers, Hep Cat and Buck-O-Nine wowing Warped Tour audiences. I asked him what he thought of this latest iteration of this timeless Jamaican rhythm. His response was enthusiastic. He'd just recorded a cover of "Honky Tonk" by his boyhood hero Bill Doggett with L.A. ska revivalists Jump With Joey for the 1997 *Ska Island* album. "It's good to know that ska is coming back," he said. "I notice a lot of artists from those old days are coming into prominence again. So it's nice. But really I would love to push the music a little further. This is my aim." GW

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GIBSON ACOUSTIC GOES BIG IN BOZEMAN, MONTANA

GIBSON GIVES BREAKS RECORDS DONATING OVER 2,500 GUITARS IN 500 DAYS TO CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS WORLDWIDE



T. Rex's Marc Bolan with a Fender Tele in 1972. "Marc is criminally underrated as a guitarist," says Tony Visconti. "All rock 'n' rollers love T. Rex, and there's a little bit of T. Rex in every rock 'n' roll band"

Marc Bolan T.REX

JURASSIC CLASSIC

ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF *ELECTRIC WARRIOR*, PRODUCER TONY VISCONTI DISCUSSES THE GENIUS OF **T. REX** GUITARIST **MARC BOLAN**

BY MARK McSTEA

IN A YEAR OF NOTABLE ANNIVERSARIES, 2021 sees the 50th anniversary of the release of *Electric Warrior* in 1971, for many the ultimate T. Rex album and the perfect encapsulation of Marc Bolan's genius. Having spent years toiling away on the club and festival circuit with his acoustic duo, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Bolan fully embraced the sound of electric guitar and the spirit of rock 'n' roll to score his first hit with "Ride a White Swan" in 1970. Its massive success turned Bolan into a global superstar, with incredible hit singles appearing every three months for the next three years. Most of the planet was in the grip of T. Rextasy, likened at the time to the fevered devotion of Beatlemania.

While the world was swooning over Bolan's pin-up looks and killer hooks, the U.S. was strangely resistant, with Bolan's only notable success being "Bang a Gong" in 1971. Bolan's run of hits started to dry up in the mid Seventies as the punk era dawned in the U.K., but his influence was immense, to the point that he was one of the few acts that wasn't subject to the "year zero"-style condemnation of so much that had preceded punk.

Electric Warrior, like most of Bolan's best albums, was produced by Tony Visconti, who was also working closely with David Bowie around the same period. Visconti's role in the success of T. Rex can't be overstated; his string arrangements were a key element of the distinctive T. Rex sound, and he knew how to get the very best out of Bolan in the studio. His

WOLFGANG HEILMAN/©CARLTON P. SANDERCOCK/WINTERGARDEN PUBLISHING

memories of working with Bolan make for fascinating reading. [His interview in the December 2020 issue of *Guitar World* — about working with Bowie and Mick Ronson on the making of *The Man Who Sold the World* — is a perfect companion to this feature.]

Bolan's career was tragically cut short in 1977, when he died in a car crash while riding in the passenger seat of the car his girlfriend, Gloria Jones, was driving. While it is impossible to know how his career would've panned out, he was undergoing a critical and artistic reassessment at the time of his passing. What can be said with certainty is that he left behind a body of work that sounds as fresh and relevant now as it ever did. There are few thrills as visceral as turning the music player of your choice up to max and letting the intro to "Bang a Gong" transport you back to the golden age of glam rock 'n' roll.

How much demoing did Bolan do prior to recording? Did he bring in basic acoustic demos or fully formed suggestions?
He was very secretive about his demos. He never brought a demo to the studio; he would teach everyone the song on the spot. Marc was terrified of being ripped off; he would have never handed demos out to anybody. Everything you hear on a T. Rex record was a live recording; nothing was replaced later on. His session guitar was the one on the left speaker, and his overdub — done about 15 minutes after we'd decided a track was a keeper — was on the right speaker.

***Electric Warrior* is packed with great moments. The guitar solo on "Mambo Sun" is classic Bolan, perfectly constructed and economical. Did he come prepared or work out his solos in the studio?**
He did both. Some were made up in the studio, and if you saw him play live, he could really improvise; he had no problem playing a 20-minute solo. [*Laughs*] He was a smart lad. "Mambo" was worked out at home, including the double-tracked part that was an octave lower.

Bolan was very hip to the roots of rock 'n' roll and rockabilly. "Jeepster" owes a huge debt to Howlin' Wolf's "You'll Be Mine," and "We Love to Boogie" borrows heavily from Webb Pierce's "Teenage Boogie," even lifting the solo. Who was influencing him?
He was more of a blues guy than me. He listened to the early blues players a lot. We both loved R&B and Little Richard. Little Richard was a *huge* inspiration to Marc. Marc turned me on to James Burton, those great solos on the Ricky Nelson singles. I'd always loved

"ONE THING HE DID THAT WAS REALLY WEIRD WAS HE MIGHT BE SOLOING IN THE KEY OF E, BUT THEN HE'D SLIDE UP THREE FRETS **AND BE PLAYING SOLOS OUT OF THE G BLUES BOX"**





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MARC BOLAN'S ELECTRIC WARRIORS

THE MAIN GUITARS Bolan used for recording *Electric Warrior* were a Fifties Les Paul Standard, purchased in a customized, semi-opaque orange finish, and a white Sixties Strat. The Les Paul was stolen after a rehearsal in 1977 and has never been recovered; the white Strat was smashed beyond repair by Bolan while onstage. Bolan used Vampower 100W amps and 4x12 cabs, made by now-defunct U.K. manufacturer Vamp (see the iconic *Electric Warrior* cover photo above). His effects setup was very simple, as it was for most guitarists at that time, comprising a Dallas Rangemaster treble booster, a Wem Copicat [tape echo] and a wah pedal.

Special thanks to Danielz of T. Rextasy, the world's only official



Marc Bolan [*right*] with T. Rex drummer Mickey Finn (shown here playing a Fender Mustang bass) in 1971

those records but I'd never known the guitarist's name. Marc was definitely very knowledgeable.

Your string arrangements are an essential component of the T. Rex sound. The strings on "Cosmic Dancer" are a great piece of music in their own right. What was the collaborative process?
Marc recognized my string writing early in the Tyrannosaurus Rex days and that was my domain exclusively; he wouldn't question anything or have any suggestions. What he loved was that I would pick up on his riffs and some of his solos and use some of those ideas in the arrangements. For "Cosmic Dancer" I had about 25 string players. We had the budget because we had the hit, of course. I was trained classically; I'm a classical guitarist and I studied some writing at school, but I was largely self-taught. I'd have a reel-to-reel and fiddle around with my classical guitar and work the parts out then write them down. It took me ages to write those parts. Now I could do the arrangement for "Cosmic Dancer" in about three hours; at that time it might have taken three days.

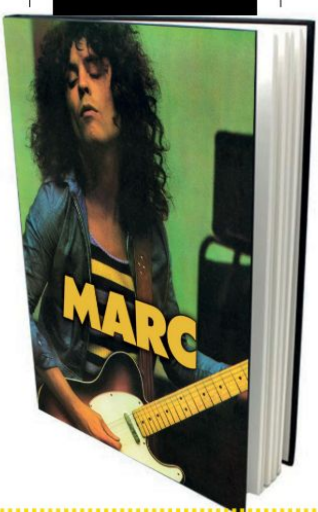
The strings set the T. Rex hits apart from their contemporaries, acts like Slade, Roxy Music and Bowie. They were almost a signature sound for T. Rex.
We realized early on that it *was* a signature sound, as you say. "Bang a Gong" didn't have a written string part. Marc wanted to go without the strings, but I said that as we'd had a few hits with strings already, maybe we should add some to this one, because, as you say, it was identifiable as his sound. This discussion was taking place while the string players were sitting in their seats. Marc looked slightly terrified at that remark. He said, "Well, what can we do?" I simply asked the string players to all play the root note of the three chords in the chorus — G, A and E. It was so simple but it was very effective.

Bolan's solo on "Lean Woman Blues" is one of his strongest. His vibrato is very distinctive and reminds me of his vocal vibrato. He always seemed very confident in his abilities as a guitarist. Was that a fair assessment or was it bluff?
He was unique; he was not bluffing. His technical knowledge guitar-wise was not great at all. He knew a handful of chords, the right ones, of course, for rock 'n' roll. He invented his own technique with that very fast vibrato — he had very strong hands. I think you're right in that it probably did go hand-in-hand with his fast vocal vibrato. He did actually woodshed for hours to get that good. One thing that he did that was really weird was that he might be soloing in the key of E, but then he'd slide up three frets and be playing solos out of the G blues box. Some of those notes are modally not the correct notes but he just played with abandon. I think that explains some of his unusual note choices. Sometimes he'd perhaps even slide up another fret from the G position. It gave him almost a Hendrix sensibility; he really loved Hendrix. I suspect Hendrix was more aware of what he was doing than Marc was in terms of modality, I think because Hendrix understood jazz. Eric Clapton was another player Marc loved. June [Bolan's wife] was Eric's girlfriend before she met Marc. She took him to Clapton's house for a weekend and Marc told me that he sat on the floor and watched Clapton play for the whole weekend. He said to me, "I sat at the feet of the master." He copped a lot of blues techniques from watching Clapton. He was a very quick learner.

MAKING HIS MARC

THE PHOTOS FOR this feature are from a spectacular new book, *Marc* (2021, Wintergarden Publishing). Carlton P. Sandercock has compiled the ultimate Marc Bolan photographic record, sourcing many previously unseen images as well as using photos from magazines, posters and press releases, all of which have been restored to pristine condition. The result is a heavyweight, 300-page, large-format book that will delight fans of the bopping elf.

For more info, visit officialmarcbolanmerchco.com.



The groove of "Bang a Gong" is irresistible. Something often overlooked on this oft-covered song is the importance of the backing vocals.
We all had a go at the backing vocals. Marc had the idea for Flo and Eddie to sing the chorus an octave higher. They cooked up that arrangement between the three of them. They were alumni of Zappa, and I think some of the oohs on the chorus may have come from their time with Frank. Marc and I loved old doo wop, as did Zappa.

You've worked with many great guitarists over the years. How would you rate Marc in comparison?
This is where Marc is different from all of the classic rock guitarists. He was cut from a different cloth; he invented himself. He had his own thing. To compare him to Ronson and Fripp and others I've worked with is difficult as his recording career was too narrow. Ronson worked with loads of other people so you get an idea of where he stood and how he could adapt his style. We can't make that comparison for Marc because he never really played with other artists. Marc is criminally underrated as a guitarist. All rock 'n' rollers love T. Rex, and there's a little bit of T. Rex in every rock 'n' roll band.

I would argue that the most important thing for a guitarist to be is "effective," to have the ability to deliver exactly what the song requires, regardless of how easy it might be to play. A prime example would be the solo on "Ride a White Swan," Bolan's breakthrough hit. He knew when to self-edit, didn't he?
Yes. We all knew he could play really fast and accurately and get a great tone out of whatever he played, but what he was doing was exactly the right thing for "Swan." The hooky part was the key to its success and why it broke him through into the major leagues. The riff and solo is almost a Burton/Chet Atkins idea. "Swan" used a capo



BOOK COVER: KIERON "SPUD" MURPHY/©CARLTON P. SANDERCOCK/WINTERGARDEN PUBLISHING



Bolan [*right*] with Steve Peregrin Took during the Tyrannosaurus Rex days

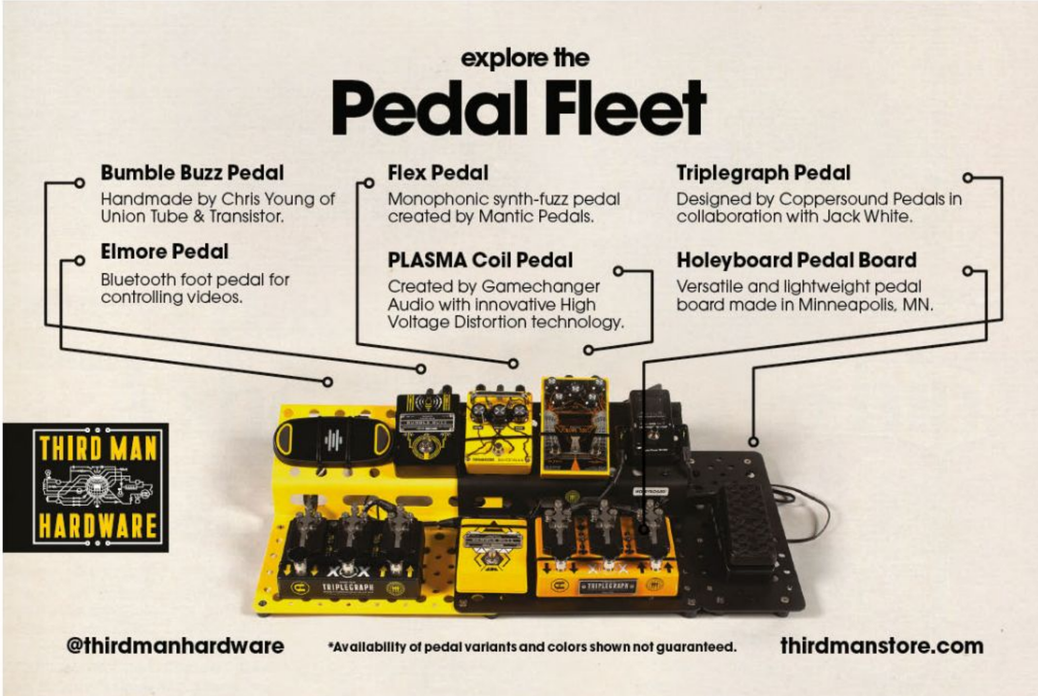
at the 4th fret so he could play those open string licks. He also played the bass part on my Precision and he again used the capo at the 4th fret as well.

The band members are often overlooked when T. Rex are discussed. Bass player Steve Currie never plays the obvious, predictable lines. His bass lines are a key element to the propulsive nature of the rhythm section. Was much time spent working on those ideas in the studio?
He was basically left to his own devices. I loved his playing. It was amazing. I can see where his jazz sensibilities came out. Steve would go to places where an average rock player would never venture and often made some simple music sound very complicated. He was one of the secret weapons of the T. Rex sound.

You've produced many iconic albums. Where do you rate *Electric Warrior*?
I think *Electric Warrior* is my favorite T. Rex album, partly because of the different ways we recorded and how we worked in a lot of studios — New York, LA and several in London. Marc was on tour so I had to catch him on the road to record. All the strings and mixing were done at Trident Studios in London. It took a lot of work to put the whole album together. I think it was a masterpiece, but I also like the following two albums, *The Slider* and *Tanx*, very much.

Fans will argue that Bolan was undergoing a creative revival at the time of his death. Do you think he could've gone on to revitalise himself in terms of creativity and ideas?
I agree with everyone who says he died too young. In the last couple of years of his life, I think his image was very important to him; he wanted to appeal to the fans that he had who had been teenyboppers, but who were now older. Had he lived I think he would have found someone like myself, or we'd have gotten together again. We did speak to each other after we stopped working together and it was always big hugs and talking about our kids. It was in the cards that we'd do something else.

What are your fondest memories of working with Marc?
I loved that the sessions were very live. I also loved the fact that he dressed to record. He wore his stage gear and his platform shoes. He'd be jumping up and down like he was on stage; everything was really great fun. We also invited friends to the sessions, so he liked to see maybe five or six people bouncing about in the control room. He always loved an audience. GW


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Monophonic synth-fuzz pedal created by Mantic Pedals.
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SOUND CHECK

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

Master Piece

FENDER ACOUSTASONIC JAZZMASTER

By Chris Gill

WITH THE INTRODUCTION of the Fender Acoustasonic Telecaster in 2019, followed by the release of the Acoustasonic Stratocaster in 2020 and the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster this year, Fender's expansion of its innovative Acoustasonic line of acoustic-electric guitars has become an annual event. While each model shares a few common features with its counterparts, the progression of Acoustasonic guitars isn't the usual "Malibu Stacy (with new hat!)" cosmetic makeover.

In addition to offering an entirely new body style with the distinctive offset Jazzmaster shape, the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster provides an entirely brand new set of 10 acoustic and electric voices, including tones generated by a humbucking Acoustasonic Shawbucker magnetic pickup, which replaces the noiseless single-coil pickup on the previous iterations. While the Tele version provided a "best of" selection of acoustic voices and the Strat model leaned more towards modern and "boutique" styles along with expanded electric voices, the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster's selection can best be described as "variety," which could make it the best choice of all for guitarists who have waited to explore the Acoustasonic experience.

FEATURES For those not familiar with the previous Fender Acoustasonic's features, here's a recap (those in the know can skip to the next paragraph). All Acoustasonic models feature a carved, hollowed-out mahogany body with an inlaid solid Sitka spruce top and a mini soundhole, all protected with a polyester satin matte finish. Transverse bracing and a tuned soundport configure a unique patented acoustic resonance chamber that



The Fender Acoustasonic Jazzmaster in Ocean Turquoise



The Fender Acoustasonic Jazzmaster in Natural

Fender calls the Stringed Instrument Resonance System (SIRS). The bolt-on necks on all three models are identical, made from mahogany and featuring a 25.5-inch scale length, 1.6875-inch nut width, 12-inch radius, ebony fingerboard, modern "deep C" profile, 22 narrow tall frets and a satin urethane finish.

Like the previous Acoustasonic models, the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster is equipped with three different pickup systems, including a Fishman under-saddle transducer and Fishman Acoustasonic Enhancer internal body sensor (for capturing percussive body slaps and enhanced harmonics). The biggest difference here is the inclusion of the new Acoustasonic Shawbucker humbucking pickup, which provides richer, darker electric tones. The Acoustasonic Jazzmaster's Fishman Acoustic Engine also provides an entirely different selection of acoustic voices via the transducer.

Ten distinctly different voices are accessed via a five-position blade pickup selector switch and a rotary blend knob, which produces a distinct voice at each furthest setting (0 or 10) or variable blends of the two grouped voices. At setting 1 (like a Strat's bridge pickup setting) the Shawbucker is engaged with clean/overdrive voices. Setting 2 uses the undersaddle piezo pickup on the "A" side like a traditional acoustic guitar, and then it's an overdriven piezo on the "B" side; setting 3 is "hi-fi" acoustic and body sensor; setting 4 is jumbo and small body acoustic (000-style); and setting 5 is the pairing of a miked rosewood-body dreadnought with a slope-shouldered mahogany dreadnought (a la a Gibson J45).

PERFORMANCE Like its other Acoustasonic brethren, the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster combines the light weight of an acoustic guitar with the slim dimensions of a solidbody electric. This model has the largest body dimensions of the three, which results in more satisfying unplugged output and sound. Its natural acoustic tone is reasonably satisfying when banging out chords, but its midrange-heavy character won't make it a replacement instrument for acoustic-only fingerstyle purists.

Of course, the Acoustasonic is ultimately designed for amplification, and here I think it outperforms the other contenders in the trio. The most ingenious voice pairing is the jumbo/small body setting where users can virtually dial in different body sizes with the blend control. The "hi fi" acoustic voice reminds me of a classic Ovation, perfect for those "Friday Night in San Francisco" workouts. Setting 5's dreadnoughts are timeless workhorse tones ideal for most studio and live performance applications.

The electric Shawbucker tones are warm and robust and nicely complement the selection of acoustic tones. Because the Acoustasonic Jazzmaster has a pin bridge and .011-.052 phosphor bronze strings with a wound G, it's better suited for rhythm playing than shredding leads on its electric settings. The natural acoustic resonance can even deliver expressive jazz tones that live up to the model's namesake. Thanks to its built-in overdrive, I found that the model pairs best with an acoustic-electric amp whereas traditional electric amps don't quite allow the acoustic voices to deliver their full potential.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $1,999.99
MANUFACTURER: Fender, fender.com

- The offset Jazzmaster body shape is larger than the Tele and Strat Acoustasonic models, which provides bigger natural acoustic tone and enhanced projection.
- The Acoustasonic Shawbucker humbucking pickup and new voices combine to provide 10 entirely new sounds to the Acoustasonic repertoire.
- Five finish options are available: Arctic White, Natural, Ocean Turquoise, Tobacco Sunburst and Tungsten.
- The controls are all located beneath the bridge, ideal for aggressive rhythm strummers who don't want to worry about hitting switches or knobs.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE:** The Fender Acoustasonic Jazzmaster delivers the most diverse set of voices yet and is arguably the coolest looking acoustic-electric ever conceived thanks to its offset body design and eye-catching finish options.

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

A Royal Visit

VICTORY AMPLIFICATION V40 THE DUCHESS

By Paul Riario



WHAT DO PLAYERS like Richie Kotzen, Guthrie Govan and Rabea Massaad have in common? Besides being terrifyingly accomplished guitarists, the many outstanding tones you may have heard on their recordings and live appearances come courtesy of Victory Amplifiers — a UK brand that's fast becoming a rising star among boutique amplifier companies. Victory is the brainchild of chief designer Martin Kidd (of Cornford amplifiers fame) together with a team of engineers that hand-build these colorful, distinctively voiced amps. Scrolling through Victory's diverse tube-amp series will reveal their amps come in the classic big-box deluxe head format or as a portable lunchbox head, along with matching speaker cabinet options. They also recast versions of their amp series in powered or preamp pedals, but as far as combos, there are only three as of this writing. For this review, I was able to check out the V40; and while it's not the company's latest offering, I chose "The Duchess" for its detailed American and British voicings, and as an introduction to the fantastic amplifiers Victory is producing.

FEATURES For a lunchbox-styled amp that's elegantly designed, tidily hand-wired and neatly compact, the roadworthy V40 is a breath of fresh air to lug around at a lightweight 18.1 lbs. But don't be fooled by its weight class; the "Duchess" packs a powerful punch as a 42-watt, single-channel amp driven by a pair of EL34 tubes (that can also be swapped for 6L6 tubes) and three 12AX7 preamp tubes. Its broad tone-shaping options are accessed via a two-position Voice switch (Voice I and II) and Mid-Kick switch, and a footswitchable digital reverb with hard bypass switch. The large stovetop-style controls for Volume, Treble, Middle, Bass, Reverb and Master have a smooth taper and feel substantial on your fingertips. The amp's front panel standby switch can be flicked to full power or low power (7 watts); and you can select either power tube for Class A operation in single-ended mode (on rear panel) when in low-power operation, which together will take the output down below 1 watt RMS. Other features include a series effects loop with hard bypass, rear-panel power switch, speaker outs for 16 ohm and dual 8 ohm (wired in parallel) and reverb footswitch jack. The amp comes complete with a padded carrying case and footswitch for reverb.

PERFORMANCE The V40's tonal wheelhouse sits in the clean-to-mildly-dirty range, and it's probably the most warmly transparent amplifier I've ever encountered. Also, if multiple stompboxes are your primary source of tone-shaping when using it, you won't be able to wipe the grin off your face when you hear how well pedals perfectly complement the V40. The controls react exactly as intended; dialing back volume and upping the master sets up gorgeous cleans, and cranking both volume and master will nudge the amp towards musically rich overdrive, but it's all about how you wish to voice it: Setting all controls midway, with Voice I activated and the Master relatively low, and auditioning both open-back 2x12 and 4x12 cabinets (loaded with Celestion Creambacks and V-Type speakers respectively), the V40 draws out the classic soft and supple tones reminiscent of mid-Sixties Fender combos, albeit at a much louder clip. Players who dabble between jazz and blues will find all the sustain and touch sensitivity become glaringly present here at full power, where the amp blooms with a natural compression that smooths the highs and firms up the mids and low end. Flicking the switch over to Voice II and increasing the volume ramps up some gritty bite that closely duplicates the snappy attack of Tweed-era amps when using single-coils, and downing the Mid-Kick switch easily ups the ante in aggression for humbuckers. Low power mode certainly tames the output by adding some compressed squish and if you like that cushioned tone, you'll dig how loose it feels. What's more, the built-in digital reverb is so beautifully ambient in its hybrid hall-meets-plate sounds, you'll almost forget you can remove it from the circuit entirely, but really, it's so lush you'll want it on all the time. The amp is enthralling in just about all it does, so if it lacks anything it would be high-end sparkle, which is not a bad thing and may only be a matter of swapping to 6L6 tubes and Alnico speakers to possibly remedy that. Regardless, I can genuinely declare the V40 is an even-tempered clean machine with balance and bite, and frankly, I'd choose this amp over anything else when faced with the many standard backline choices.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $1,399

MANUFACTURER: Victory Amps, victoryamps.com

- The V40 offers two voicing options, all on one channel, with Voice I yielding mid-Sixties American cleans with warmth or Voice II for a stronger midrange with punch. A Mid-Kick switch pushes the amp to overdriven British blues-rock tones.

- The V40's high power mode is rated at 42 watts, and the front panel switch offers a low-power mode at 7 watts. In single-ended, low-power mode, you can take the amp's output down below 1 watt RMS.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The spectacular Victory V40 "The Duchess" coaxes a wide range of low-to-medium drive tones and silky cleans that sound massive on their own, or further enhanced when combined with stompboxes as a pedal platform.



GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

Goldie Licks

LTD DELUXE EC-1000T CTM

By Chris Gill

THE CLASSIC LP-STYLE single-cutaway, dual-humbucker, mahogany-with-maple-cap solidbody design was introduced nearly 70 years ago, which has given guitar builders a lot of time to come up with refinements and modifications. The challenge with updating such a beloved classic is finding the right balance between traditional features that players consider essential and modern upgrades that many of today's guitarists prefer. LTD strives to do exactly that with the EC-1000T, which is designed to satisfy even the most Goldilocks-like players by offering a blend of classic looks and specs with enhanced playability and versatile electronics. We looked at the new LTD Deluxe series EC-1000T CTM, which is available with either a see-through Black Cherry gloss finish (as tested) or Tobacco Sunburst satin finish.

FEATURES Let's start with the traditional features first. The LTD EC-1000T CTM is made completely from traditional tone woods: a mahogany body with flamed maple top and three-piece mahogany neck with Macassar ebony fingerboard. The body is full thickness, meaning it does not have any additional contours such as a belly contour on the back or forearm contour on the front. The neck has a 24.75-inch scale length and 22 frets, and the three-way pickup switch selects bridge/both/neck settings.

The modern upgrades are more numerous, but they don't overwhelm the model's classic appeal. The body is chambered for weight relief, and the set-through neck design provides the tonal characteristics of a set-neck design with the smooth, seamless feel of neck-thru-body construction along with unrestricted access to the uppermost frets. The frets have a jumbo profile and are stainless steel to resist wear and tear. Thanks to the "thin U" neck profile, 42mm nut width (comparable to a Strat instead of a traditional LP's 43mm nut width) and flat 350mm (about 13.75 inch) radius, the neck delivers the fast playability many players prefer today. Hardware includes gold-plated LTD locking tuners and TonePros locking TOM bridge and tailpiece.

Perhaps the most radical upgrade is the electronics. The pickups are a pair of Fishman Open Core Classic humbuckers (with custom black nickel pole pieces), which each provide three distinct tones. The bridge pickup offers vintage PAF, classic hot rod and slightly overwound single-coil tones, while the neck pickup features vintage PAF, clear airy chime and vintage single-coil tones. The different pickup voices are activated via push/pull potentiometers — pulling up on the master tone control activates the PAF tones (Voice 1), pulling up on the neck volume knob activates the single-coil tones (Voice 3; which overrides all other voice settings), and both down access the hot rod/airy chime setting (Voice 2; the default position for hotter output at the bridge). The three-knob control configuration also includes a bridge pickup volume control.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $1,149

MANUFACTURER: ESP Guitar Company, espguitars.com

- The set-thru neck joint eliminates the bulky heel of traditional set neck construction and provides a slim, seamless transition between the neck and body.
- A pair of Fishman Open Core Classic humbuckers provides three distinct sets of pickup tone characteristics: PAF, single-coil and hot rod/airy chime.

THE BOTTOM LINE
With its "just right" combination of classic and contemporary features, the LTD EC-1000T CTM is a versatile solidbody that combines classic looks with modern playability, comfort and expanded tonal variety.





PERFORMANCE Fhe LTD Deluxe EC-1000T CTM truly lives up to its "deluxe" designation with its gold-plated hardware and multi-layer binding surrounding the top, back and headstock. The craftsmanship is exceptional, with the smoothly polished frets and rounded edges where the neck binding meets the fingerboard providing outstanding feel and playability.

The expanded tonal range provided by the Fishman Open Core Classic humbuckers elevate the EC-1000T CTM to a level of versatility well beyond the traditional LP-style dual-humbucker guitar. The PAF setting delivers as promised, with that "just right" balance of body, warmth and clarity. The hot rod bridge/airy chime neck setting was my favorite, providing a fat, harmonically rich growl at the bridge setting ideal for vicious power chords and vivacious solos, while the "airy chime" neck pickup excelled at rich clean tones with an alluring blend of body and upper midrange cut. The single-coil setting is the real deal, providing bolder, more aggressive single-coil tones than the usual split-coil settings of a full-size humbucker.

If you prefer the look, feel and tones of an LP-style single-cutaway guitar, but also need to access bold, blazing single-coil tones, the LTD EC-1000T CTM is the perfect choice for players seeking a do-it-all main ax.

Buzz Bin



Dawner Prince Electronics Pulse Rotating Speaker Emulator

I ABSOLUTELY LOVE the rotating speaker effect. It's the sound frequently associated with guitar legends like Peter Frampton and, most notably, David Gilmour. I've tried and owned nearly all types of that effect — from an actual Leslie speaker cabinet to numerous pedals like the Hughes & Kettner Tube Rotosphere and Strymon Lex — because nothing beats the "magic" of adding that rhythmic Leslie swirl to your sound. Recently, I received the Pulse Rotating Speaker Emulator from Dawner Prince Electronics, a Croatian boutique pedal company known for duplicating hard-to-find vintage effects (their "Boonar" is a very convincing Binson Echorec clone) and now, the Pulse, which aims to faithfully replicate the combination of Gilmour's custom Doppola rotary speaker cabinets and the rare Gibson Maestro Rover RO-1 in a relatively compact pedal. If you think this is just another Leslie simulator, you'll need to pay close attention, because according to designer and CEO, Zoran Kraljevic, "I like to say that every Leslie is rotary, but not every rotary is Leslie..." And therein lies the hard-hitting truth: The Pulse is a stirring rotating speaker effect that pronounces its swirls in a completely novel way.

Besides having the requisite Fast and Slow Speed controls, the pedal includes controls for Distance (sets the virtual mic placement distance from speaker cabinet), Inertia (sets the acceleration/deceleration ramp speeds of speaker), and Mix (dry/wet input signal). The Pulse also features a TRS stereo input, an external input for an expression pedal or remote speed switch, true bypass and Fast/Slow status LEDs, two trim pots (Volume Left and Right) to set output signal levels to the stereo outputs, and runs on 9V DC power.

Kraljevic's online scouring to find a couple of Rovers for emulating the sounds found in the Pulse certainly paid off. Compared to other rotary speaker pedals, the Pulse is richly detailed, far more nuanced and inherently different from other Leslie sims. Running it in mono, it has a clear sonic trifecta of atmospheric chorusing and wispy flanging on the backend, and watery-phasing up front that approaches a quasi-Leslie texture on slower settings. Ramping up to faster speeds closely elicits that wet Hammond B3/Leslie rotary effect found on Pink Floyd's "Any Colour You Like." Also, the interactive Distance and Mix controls make all the difference in how you wish to perceive its swirled modulation and undulating revolutions. For more dramatic speaker whirl, the Pulse really is meant to be run in stereo for its smooth rotations that fully blossom toward a beautifully chewy and spacious sound. I'm absolutely sucked in to the Pulse's captivatingly unique spin. *— Paul Riario*

STREET PRICE: $399.95

MANUFACTURER: Dawner Prince Electronics, dawnerprince.com


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AMAZED
AGAIN
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STRING THEORY
by Jimmy Brown



For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/July2021

I GOT RHYTHM, PART 18

Triplets and swing eighth notes

PREVIOUSLY, WE LOOKED at various ways to continually split a bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ meter into even halves. Like binary cell division, you start with one whole note, then go to two half notes then four quarter notes. You can then keep halving the note values and doubling the number of notes, by subdividing the beats into eighth, 16th and 32nd notes. We also explored a bunch of different ways to mix and match these fractional note values to create a wide assortment of appealing rhythms. That's all well and good, but not all music has that "binary" feel. And so today I'd like to show you a different way to subdivide a beat, which is to split it into three notes of equal duration, what are called *eighth-note triplets.*

A triplet is, by definition, an odd number, so subdividing a beat into thirds kind of "goes against the grain" of the even, multiples-of-two grid of eighth and 16th notes. It's like trying to fit a triangular peg into a square hole. As such, triplets require you to subdivide and count in a different way. Interestingly, many music historians consider the triplet to be the oldest rhythm known to man and perhaps the most innately natural one, with examples dating back to primitive Celtic and African tribal music.

Using notes from the E minor pentatonic scale, **FIGURE 1** is a two-bar phrase played in an eighth-note triplet rhythm. As always, be sure to tap your foot on each beat as you play. You'll notice that I've indicated two different, alternative ways to count the triplets. Each is commonly used and has its advantages and disadvantages. The first way — "1 & a, 2 & a, 3 & a, 4 & a" — works best at faster tempos because it's easier to vocalize. (Kind of like the mental and verbal equivalent of hitting a speed bag.) The disadvantage is that it borrows and rhythmically repurposes the syllables "and" and "uh" (written as "&" and "a" here to save space) from 16th-note counting and puts them in different places within the beat, which can be potentially confusing. The advantage of the other counting method — "1 trip let, 2 trip let, 3 trip let, 4 trip let" — is that it uses new, different syllables for the second and third notes of the triplet, so there's no potential for confusion. But reciting these syllables can create a tongue twister at a quick tempo.

Regarding technique, triplets can be challenging to work out your pick strokes with, since you have an odd number of notes — three — but an even number of strokes — two (down and up). So if you're alternate picking, you end up switching the directions of the strokes on each beat, going from down-up-down to up-down-up, reversing "polarity," so to speak. A helpful and widely used practice for avoiding this and achieving smooth phrasing with triplets is to judiciously employ hammer-ons and pull-offs, as I demonstrate here.

Eighth-note triplets serve as the basis for another common and popular rhythm: *swing eighth notes*, or *swing eighths*, for short. These are formed by tying, or combining the durations of, the first two notes of the triplet, resulting in a lopsided, "long-short" sound. **FIGURE 2** illustrates how this works and three different, alternative ways to notate the same rhythm, including, in bar 2, the simplest and most convenient shorthand notation for swing eighth notes.

FIGURE 3 offers an example of how eighth-note triplets and swing eighths are typically used together in a blues-style phrase, with the indication "swing feel," which is also known as a "shuffle." Classic examples of this feel can be found in "Pride and Joy" by Stevie Ray Vaughan and "Roadhouse Blues" by the Doors.

FIGURE 4 exemplifies what may be called "backwards," or "reverse" swing eighths, which are formed by instead consolidating the durations of the second and third notes of an eighth-note triplet, as happens during beats 3 and 4 of bar 1 and bar 2, notated two different ways.

FIG. 1

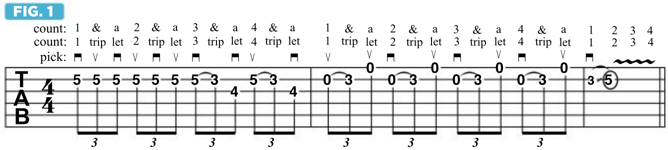


FIG. 2

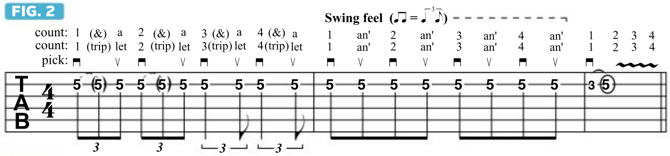


FIG. 3

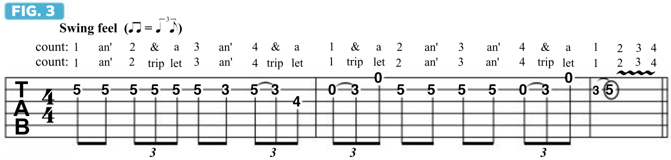
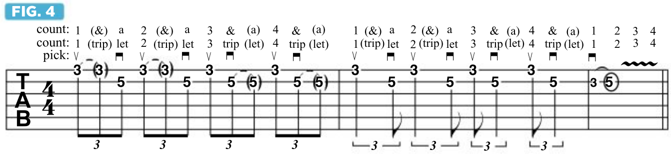


FIG. 4



Senior Music Editor "Downtown" Jimmy Brown is an experienced, working musician, performer and private teacher in the greater NYC area whose mission is to entertain, enlighten and inspire people with his guitar playing.

IN DEEP
by Andy Aledort



For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/July2021

AROUND THE BENDS, PART 6

Transitioning from E minor pentatonic to E Dorian

LAST MONTH, WE examined string-bending techniques on the high E string within the framework of the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D). For each note, we looked at a variety of ways to create improvised melodies by bending up to, or back down to, each note in the scale. This month, we will expand our look at string-bending techniques on the high E string to include notes from the E Dorian mode.

The Dorian mode is one of the seven fundamental modes that are derived from the seven-note major scale. The major scale itself is one of the fundamental modes, and is known as the Ionian mode. The notes of E Dorian are E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯, D. You'll notice that two of the notes in the scale are sharp, F♯ and C♯. If you know your key signatures (which is a useful thing to know), two sharps signifies the key of D and the D major scale: D, E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯. If one were to think of the second scale degree of D major, E, as the root note, and play the same series of notes up to an E note one octave higher, the E Dorian mode is formed: D, E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯ becomes E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯, D.

Although the two modes — D Ionian and E Dorian — are made up of the same seven notes, the difference between them becomes clear when one hears the notes played in context, over the appropriate I ("one") chord. When these notes are played over a D chord, they convey the sound of the D major scale/Ionian mode. When they're played over Em, the E Dorian mode is heard.

The E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D) is a five-note scale that lives within E Dorian: omitting the notes F♯ and C♯ from E Dorian will yield E minor pentatonic. So it's easy to see the close connection between the two scales, and this invites new opportunities for improvised melodies when soloing.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the E Dorian mode as played up the high E string. As detailed above, E Dorian adds two notes, F♯ and C♯, to E minor pentatonic. **FIGURE 2** illustrates the addition of F♯, as well as a lick that includes this note. **FIGURE 3** adds C♯ to the note set and presents a lick that incorporates both C♯ and F♯.

FIG. 1 E Dorian

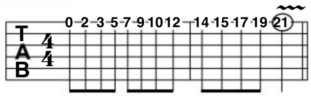


FIG. 2

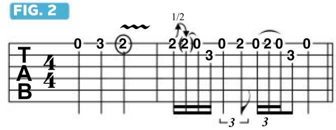


FIG. 3

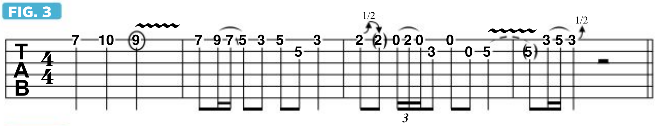


FIG. 4

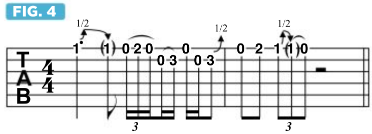
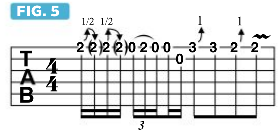


FIG. 5



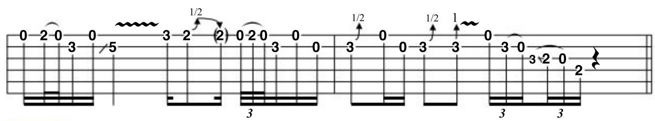
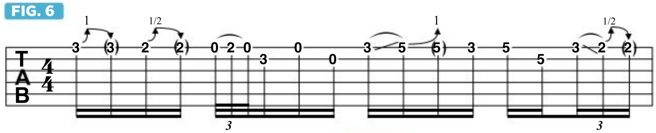


FIG. 6



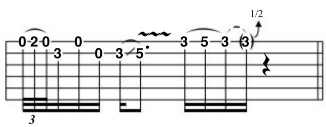


FIG. 7

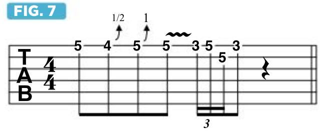
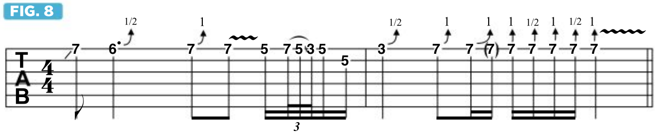


FIG. 8



The first fretted note from E Dorian on the high E string is F♯, located at the 2nd fret. **FIGURE 4** demonstrates bending up to F♯ from F natural, one fret below, which is considered an "outside" note, used here as a chromatic passing tone. In **FIGURE 5**, the focus is on G, the next higher note in the scale, with phrases demonstrating how you can bend both up to and back down to G. **FIGURES 6-8** offer phrases that are centered on the subsequent pitches of E Dorian, A, B and C♯.

Guitar World **Associate Editor Andy Aledort is recognized worldwide for his vast contributions to guitar instruction, via his many best-selling instructional DVDs, transcription books and online lessons.**

THE GRISTLE REPORT

by Greg Koch



For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/July2021

IT'S ORGAN-IC!

Emulating organ-type chord melodies

AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT in my guitar education was the study of the way jazz and blues organ players *comp*, or lay down a chord progression while accompanying a soloist, be it themself or someone else. A great example of this stylistic approach is heard on the tune, "2.65," from my 1994 album *Strat's Got Your Tongue*. "2.65" is one of my earliest compositions, and my goal with it was to affect a block-chording/Hammond B3 organ-type sound with a shuffle (eighth-note triplet-based) groove. The song is constructed from shifting triads played over various open-string pedal tones, and this approach is one that I think can be adopted in a broader way, outside of the scope of the tune itself.

There are two sections of the tune, and **FIGURE 1** represents the main melody, or "A" section. In bars 1-8, I'm harmonizing the A Mixolydian mode (A, B, C♯, D, E, F♯, G) with a series of triads played on the D, G and B strings while "pumping" an open A-string pedal tone in a manner similar to what you hear B3 organ players do all of the time. Keyboard players would play a part like this by sounding the descending chord voicings with the right hand while adding the syncopated bass-note accents with the left hand. Guitar players can approximate this sound by fingerpicking, using the index, middle and ring finger to sound the chords while using the thumb to add the syncopated pedal-tone bass notes. Another option is to hybrid pick the figure, using a flatpick to strike the bass notes and the bare fingers to pluck the chords.

The highest note in each of the moving chord voicings, which are the notes on the B string , can be thought of as the melody, and the lower chord tones on the G and D strings serve to harmonize it below. The first bar of **FIGURE 2** depicts the A Mixolydian mode played in descending fashion on the B string, and then the next two bars detail each of the three-note triads played in the descending sequence G/A - F♯m/A - Em/A - D/A - A7 - Bm/A - A.

Bars 1-3 of **FIGURE 1** illustrate how I used this approach to kick off the "A" section of "2.65." Notice that I'm repeatedly striking the open A-string pedal tone with my thumbed downstrokes in a syncopated rhythm against the moving triads. I like to add some distinct articulation to each voicing by either sliding up to it from below, adding some vibrato by shaking the strings, or briefly sliding one fret higher and back — the *chromatic half-step shift* — akin to momentarily bending the pitches of the triad slightly higher.

After stating the melody the first time, I add one of my favorite turnarounds, found in bar 4 of **FIGURE 1** and also depicted more simply in **FIGURE 3**. While the A note at the 2nd fret on the G string remains constant among the voicings, the notes on the A, D and B strings move down chromatically to sound the progression A7/C♯ - Cdim7 - Bm7♭5 - A.

After the initial melody is repeated, the progression then modulates down a whole step to G, and similar voicings are played (see **FIGURE 1**, bars 9-12), which are based on the G Mixolydian mode (G, A, B, C, D, E, F).

Next month, we'll tackle the tune's "B" section, which modulates up to C.

FIG. 1

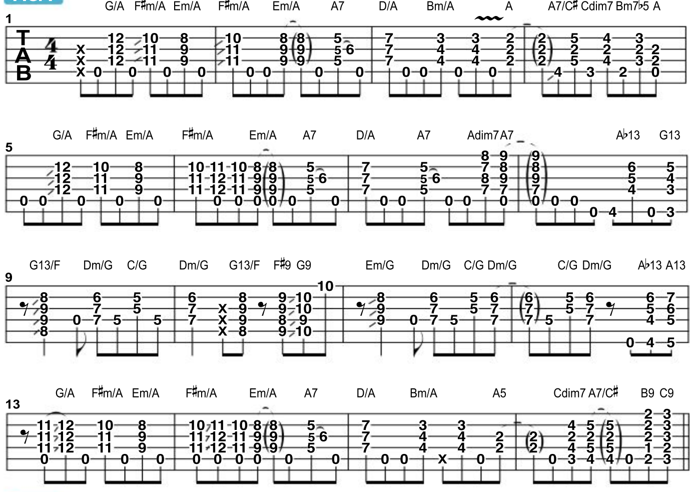


FIG. 2

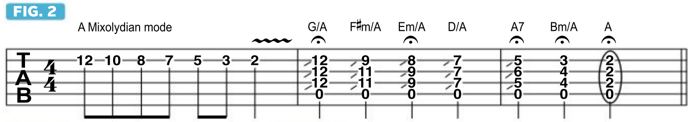


FIG. 3

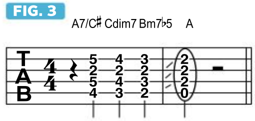
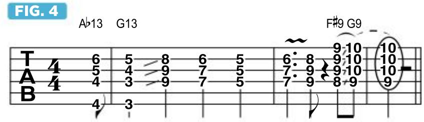


FIG. 4



Greg Koch is a large human who coaxes guitars into submission in a way that has left an indelible print on the psyches of many Earth dwellers. Visit GregKoch.com to check out his recordings, instructional materials, signature musical devices and colorful hats.

TOM NOVIK

MELODIC MUSE
by Andy Timmons



For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/July2021

SOUND EXPLORATIONS

Developing improvised lines on single strings

THIS MONTH, I'D like to continue our exploration into the horizontal approach — moving up and down a single string — to crafting improvised solos. We started with one finger on one string, the benefit of which is that it immediately pulls you out of playing familiar "positional" phrases and forces you to listen, hear and think melodically, without being guided by physical and visual habits.

All players are best served by getting to the point where one can play with confidence and total freedom while ascending or descending each and every string. The first step in laying this foundation of fretboard visual awareness is to play a scale (or a series of scales) up and down each of the six strings, one at a time. Sticking with the A natural minor scale (A, B, C, D, E, F, G) from last month, **FIGURE 1** illustrates the scale played in ascending and descending fashion on alternating strings, starting on the low E string and working our way over to the high E. For extra practice and reinforcement, try "backtracking" up or down each string before moving on to the next higher one.

The point here is not to create another type of "restraint," by forcing oneself to use this approach only. When you familiarize yourself with moving up and down the fretboard in this way, in time it will serve to open up the entire palette of every area of the neck, so that no matter where you place your hand, you will have established a visual as well as an aural connection to where you are and what the sound will be. You will then have no barriers. Any note that I play, I instantly hear what I want the next note to be, and my melodic intent carries me through the entire solo, no matter how long it may be.

After having learned all of the modes, in every key and fretboard position, it was this type of linear, horizontal approach that really afforded me the tools to express my musical ideas in a less encumbered way and lead me to a more melodic style overall.

FIGURE 2 presents an improvised solo played over the progression Am - G - F - E7 that we've been using as a template in the previous couple of lessons. In this example, I simply tried to play with absolute freedom, allowing the advantages of the linear approach to lead the way. It's true exploration and a complete, unknown adventure once you start, and it's the "not knowing where it's headed" factor that I find to be the most rewarding. I actually don't want to know the ending before it happens! I just want to help it get there in a musical way.

I begin over Am by accentuating the 4th, D, on both the G string, in bar 1, and the D string, in bar 2. Bars 3 and 4 are played over the underlying G chord, and the lines have one foot in Am and one in G, so to speak. Throughout the rest of the solo, I aim to reference the triadic tones of each successive chord, but do so in a way that doesn't sacrifice the overall musical story by sounding like I'm taking too much of a learned, or "academic" approach. So go exploring! It's the best way to improvise.

FIG. 1 A natural minor scale on every string

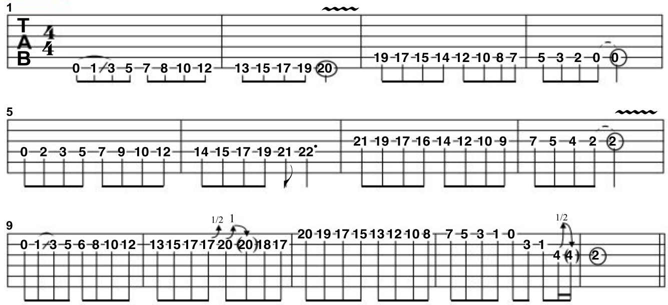
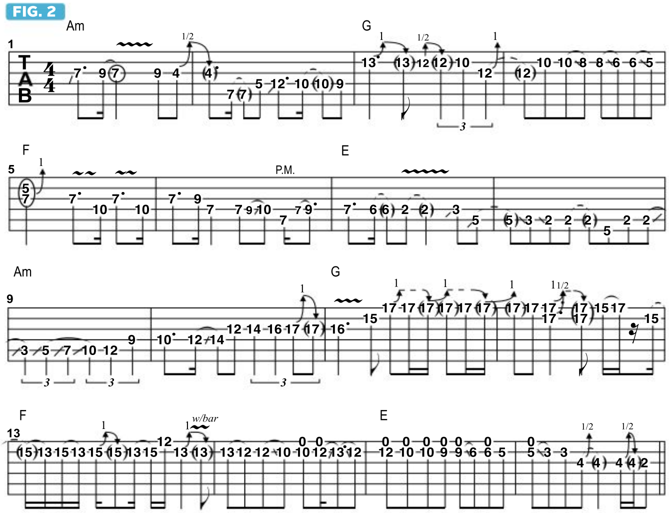


FIG. 2



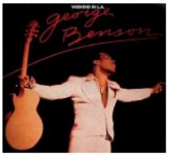
Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, as well as Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. Visit andytimmons.com and guitarxperience.net to check out his recordings and many instructional releases

SIMONE CECHETTI

PERFORMANCE NOTES

...HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS...

"ON BROADWAY"
George Benson



RECORDED AT THE West Hollywood Roxy Theater in 1977, this 10-minute version of George Benson's celebrated live cover of "On Broadway" features the brilliant jazz guitarist stretching out his legendary improvisation and alternate picking chops in two extended, inspired solos, the first of which (see section G, bars 75-123) was edited out of the shorter single version of the recording that most listeners are familiar with. To reference the shorter track, we've included throughout the transcription, in brackets, the "CD" time count numbers that match that alternate version.

Compositionally, the song is rather straightforward, built around a repeating two-chord vamp that starts out going from A♭ to G♭ then modulates up a half step at two points during the arrangement — A to G for the second verse (see sections C and D) then, finally, at section E (bar 51), B♭ to A♭, where it stays for the remainder of the song. This is the vamp that George solos over. What he does over it is absolutely brilliant and creatively resourceful, fueled by both a strong sense of rhythm and groove (lots of 16th-note syncopations) and harmonic sophistication.

The vamp dictates a B♭ Mixolydian modal approach (B♭, C, D, E♭, F, G, A♭), which George uses extensively. He also adds a lot of chromatic passing tones and color tones, such as the ♭3, D♭, and ♭5, E, which are the "blue notes," and does so with imaginative phrasing and melodic contours that roll smoothly and also "pop" rhythmically in certain spots, again tying in with his amazing rhythmic musicality. Particularly noteworthy is the way Benson plays various arpeggios over the vamp, such as B♭ (B♭, D, F), A♭ (A♭, C, E♭) and A♭maj7 (A♭, C, E♭, G) and tastefully mixes them with chromatic passing tones, especially during his more well-known second solo, beginning at section K (bar 151).

Studying these solos may be somewhat baffling for a lot of non-jazz players who aren't accustomed to playing and thinking in the "horn" key of B♭. A worthwhile study project would be to write out everything one fret lower, to put all the notes in the context of the more rock-guitarist friendly key of A.

— JIMMY BROWN

"ROLLING 7s"
Dirty Honey



THIS SUPER-CATCHY newer rock song offers a fresh helping of meat-and-potatoes Les-Paul-through-a-Marshall bluesy riffing and soloing that recalls the best of the 1980s L.A. hard rock scene, as epitomized by Guns 'N Roses. Dirty Honey guitarist John Notto is obviously well versed in this classic style and the art of dynamic playing and working a cranked tube amp with your touch. He kicks off the song with a simmering fingerpicked riff that brings to mind what Angus Young does on the AC/DC songs "Rock and Roll Ain't Noise Pollution" and "Have a Drink on Me." Notto softly thumbpicks his open low E string in opposition to fingerpicked 3rd and 4th intervals fretted on the D and G strings, adding a touch of soulful finger vibrato to the held notes.

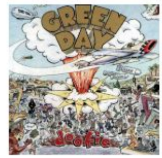
The song builds nicely through the pre-chorus (section C), leading into the chorus (section D), where Notto and bassist Justin Smolian cut loose with a hard-driving single-note riff in E that features just the right mix of picked notes, pull-offs, rests and well-placed power chord punctuations. By switching to an aggressive attack with the pick, Notto pushes his amp into thick overdrive, perhaps with the aid of a volume boost on the guitar or a pedal.

For his first solo (see section H), Notto makes great use of the 9th-position C♯ minor pentatonic (C♯, E, F♯, G♯, B) "box" pattern, using expressive bends and vibratos to make his guitar sing, and additionally incorpates notes from the C♯ natural minor scale (C♯, D♯, E, F♯, G♯, A, B) over the changing chords to add some melodic color, in a way that brings to mind the soloing styles of Slash, Jimmy Page, Angus Young and Eddie Van Halen.

Notto and his bandmates kick things up a notch for the second solo (see section J). Playing in the key of A here, over a transposed incarnation of the song's chorus riff, the guitarist gets "busier," with faster phrases, using notes from the A minor blues scale (A, C, D, E♭, E, G), playing in the 5th-position box, before shifting up to the 14th-position box for the parallel A major blues scale (A, B, C, C♯, E, F♯), which may also be thought of as its relative minor scale, F♯ minor blues (F♯, A, B, C, C♯, E).

— JIMMY BROWN

"LONGVIEW"
Green Day



THIS MID-NINETIES breakout song for Green Day features their signature melodic punk style and simple but effective riffing, served up with an undercurrent of eighth-notes triplets, what may be called a "punk shuffle," similar to what the Clash had used in "London Calling."

In stark contrast to the roaring power chords that come crashing in on the song's chorus, the arrangement begins sparsely, with bassist Mike Dirnt playing a swinging, catchy four-bar walking bass figure that effectively implies a repeating E-D chord vamp, with drummer Tré Cool providing a conga-like tomtoms-only beat as accompaniment. Playing with a pick, Dirnt judiciously combines notes from the arpeggios E major (E, G♯, B) and D major (D, F♯, A), both of which live together in the E Mixolydian mode (E, F♯, G♯, A, B, C♯, D), to convey the implied chord changes, targeting the root note on the downbeat of each bar to clearly establish the tonality before hitting the other chord tones and non-chord tones. Notice how, in the fourth bar of the repeating riff (see bar 9) the bassist cleverly takes advantage of his open D string to use it as a pedal tone beneath moving fretted notes on the G string.

As the chorus kicks in at section C, guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong boldly pounds out B5, A5 and E5 power chords in a "long-short" swing-eighths rhythm, using alternate strumming. Rather than just strumming the chords, though, he embellishes them on the eighth-note upbeats, which helps accentuate the downbeats. Notice how, on the B5 chord, the guitarist lifts up his fret hand's 3rd finger from the 9th fret to expose the note barred at the 7th fret with the 1st finger, creating melodic activity within the otherwise static chord. On the A5 and D5 chords, he employs fret-hand muting to create those pitchless "dead" notes, indicated by X's in the tablature. This is performed by momentarily relaxing your fret-hand grip on the strings, just enough that they break contact with the frets. All the while, Armstrong employs his signature "wood sawing" strumming motion, with the pick slamming down onto the strings on each downbeat then brushing them with upstrokes on the upbeats.

— JIMMY BROWN

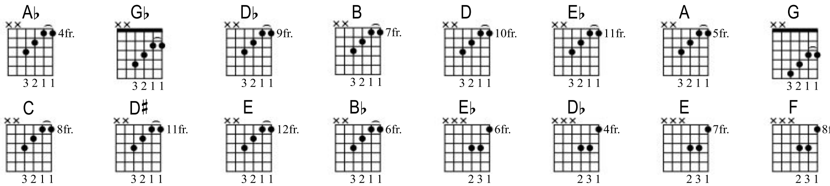
"ON BROADWAY"

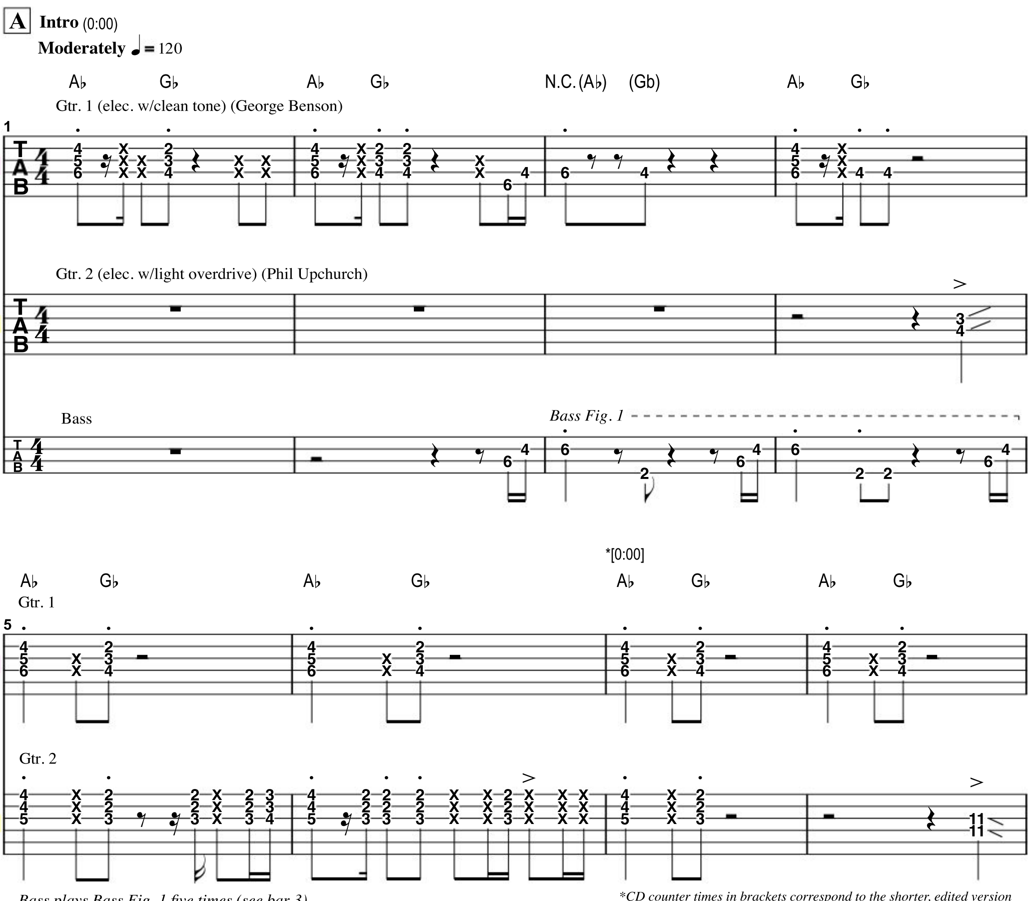
George Benson

As heard on **WEEKEND IN L.A.**

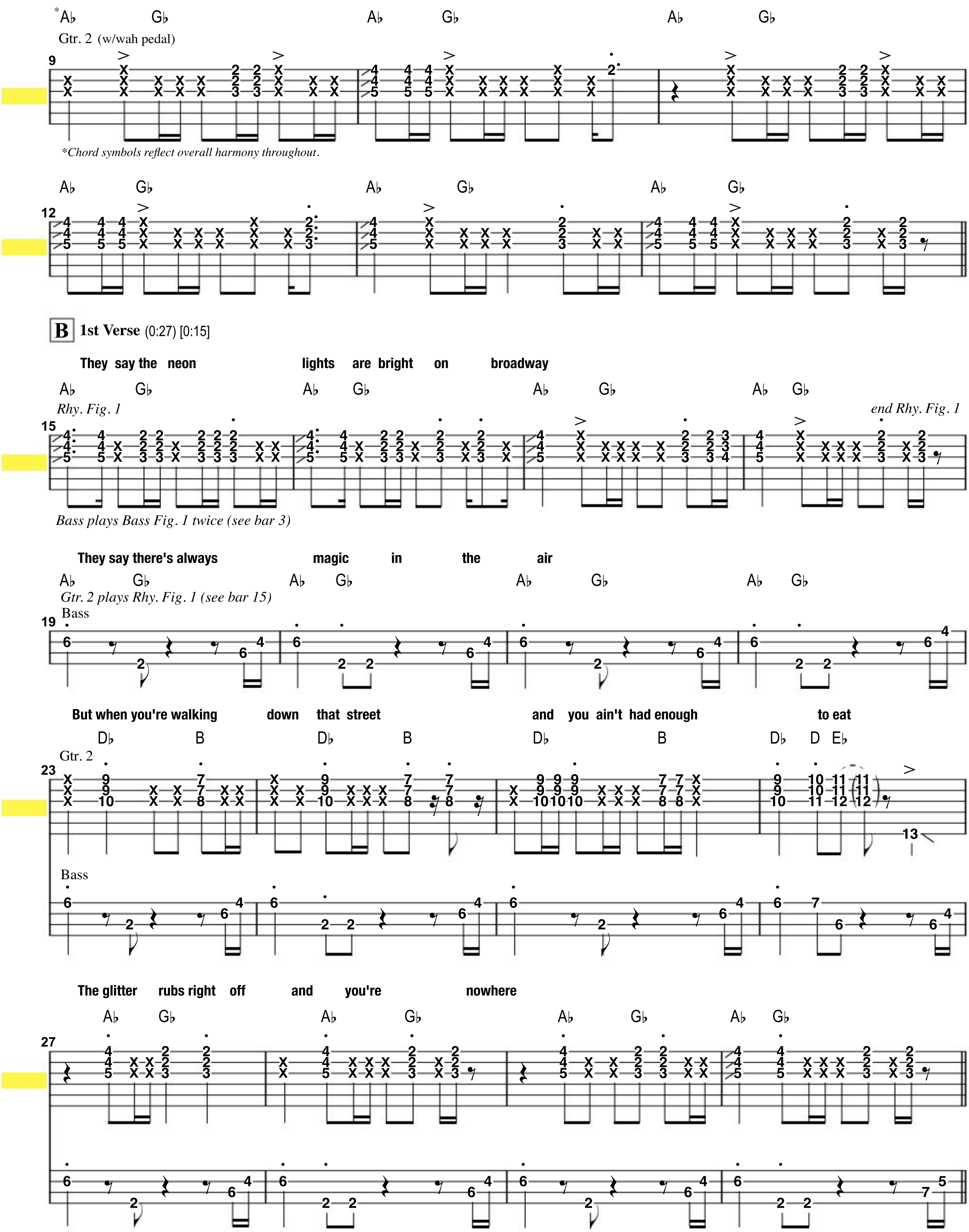
Words and Music by BARRY MANN, CYNTHIA WEILL, JERRY LEIBER *and* MIKE STOLLER

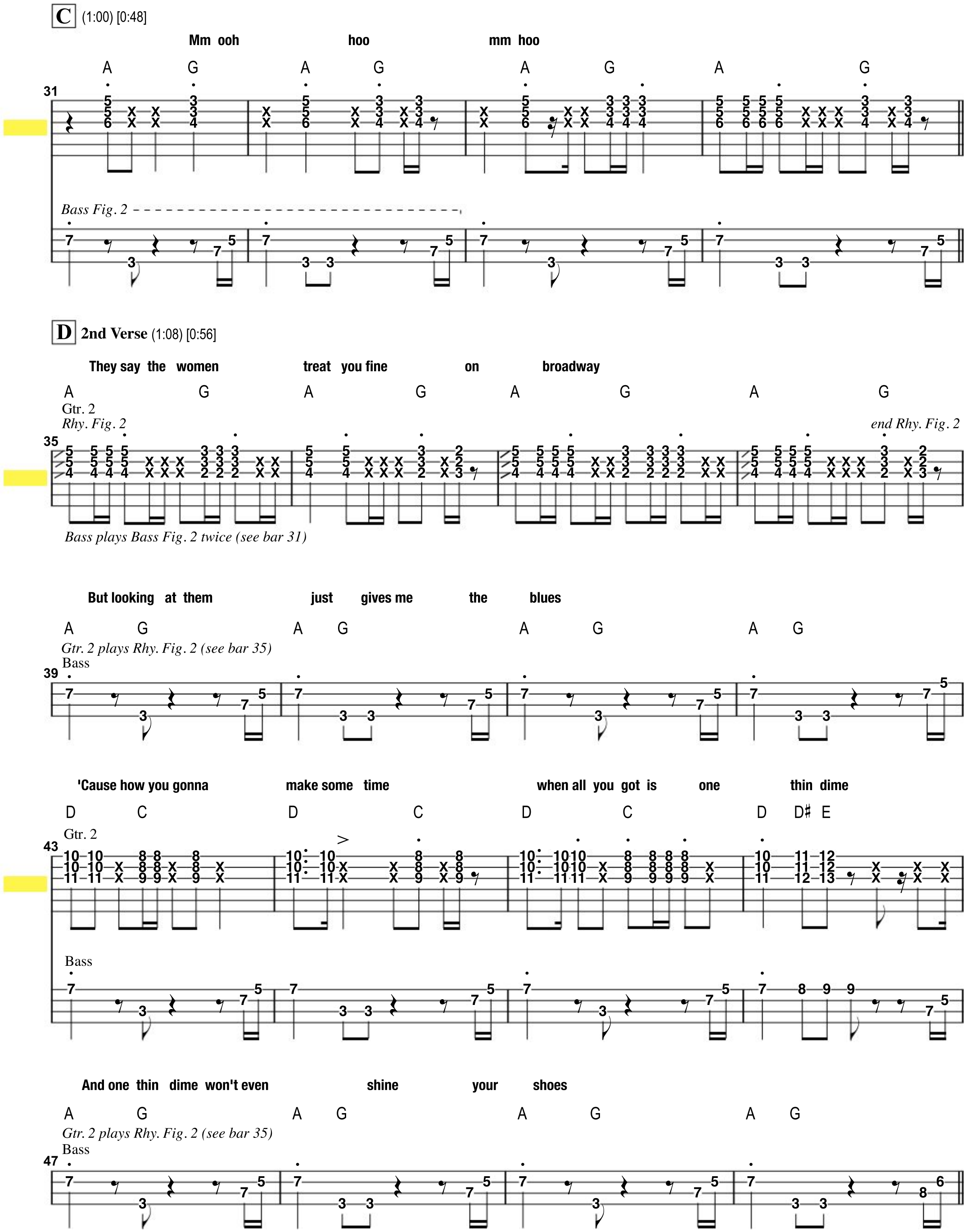
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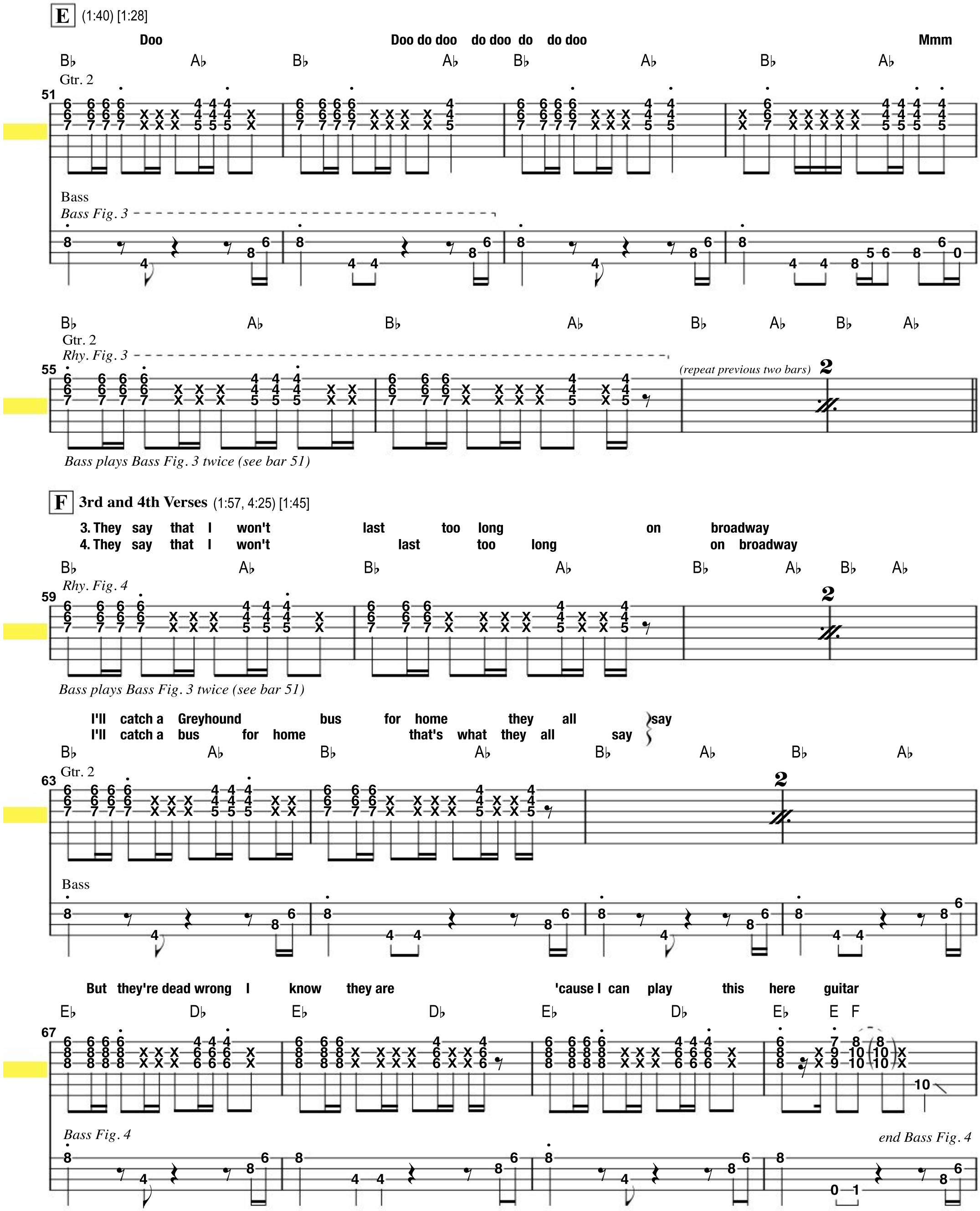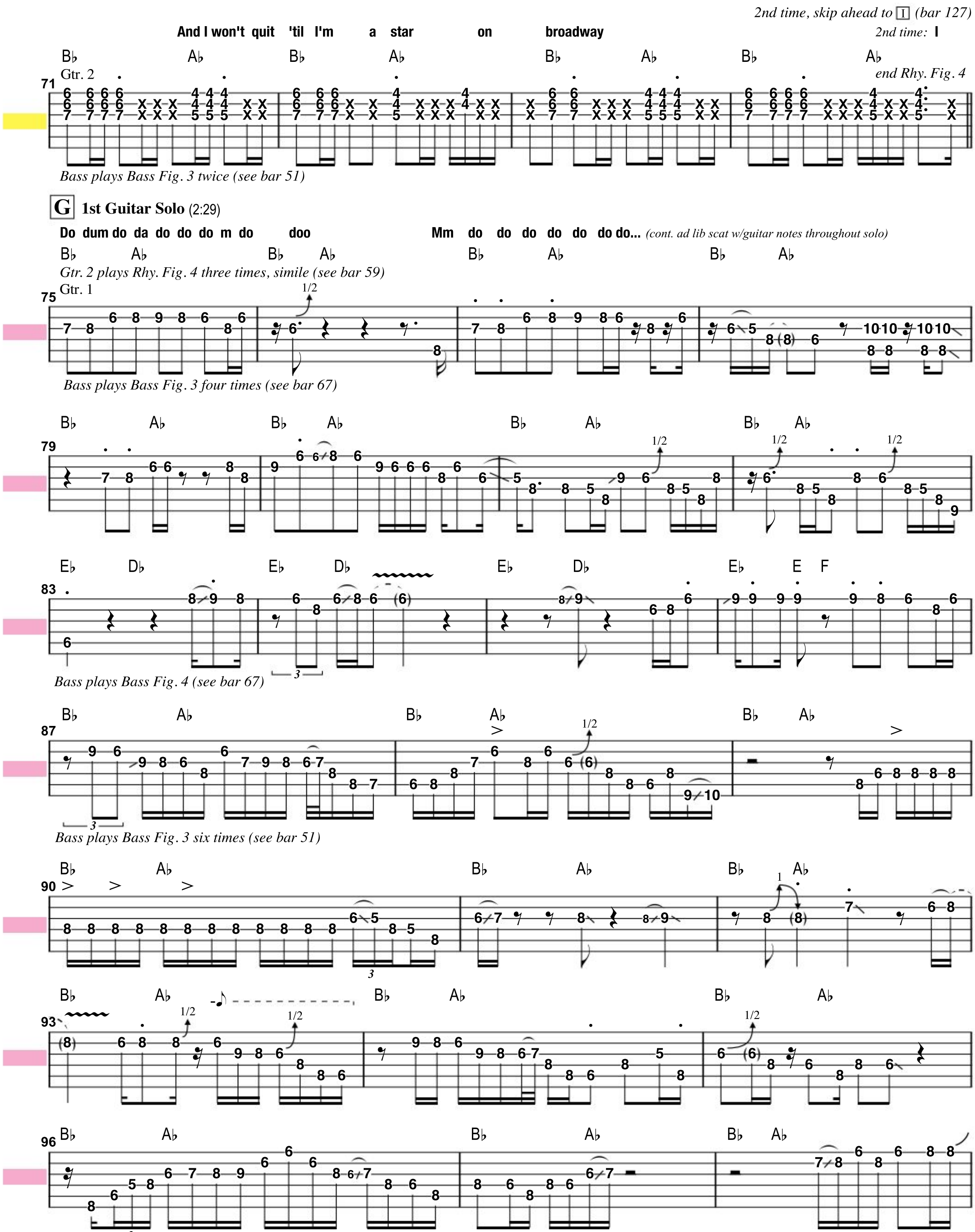




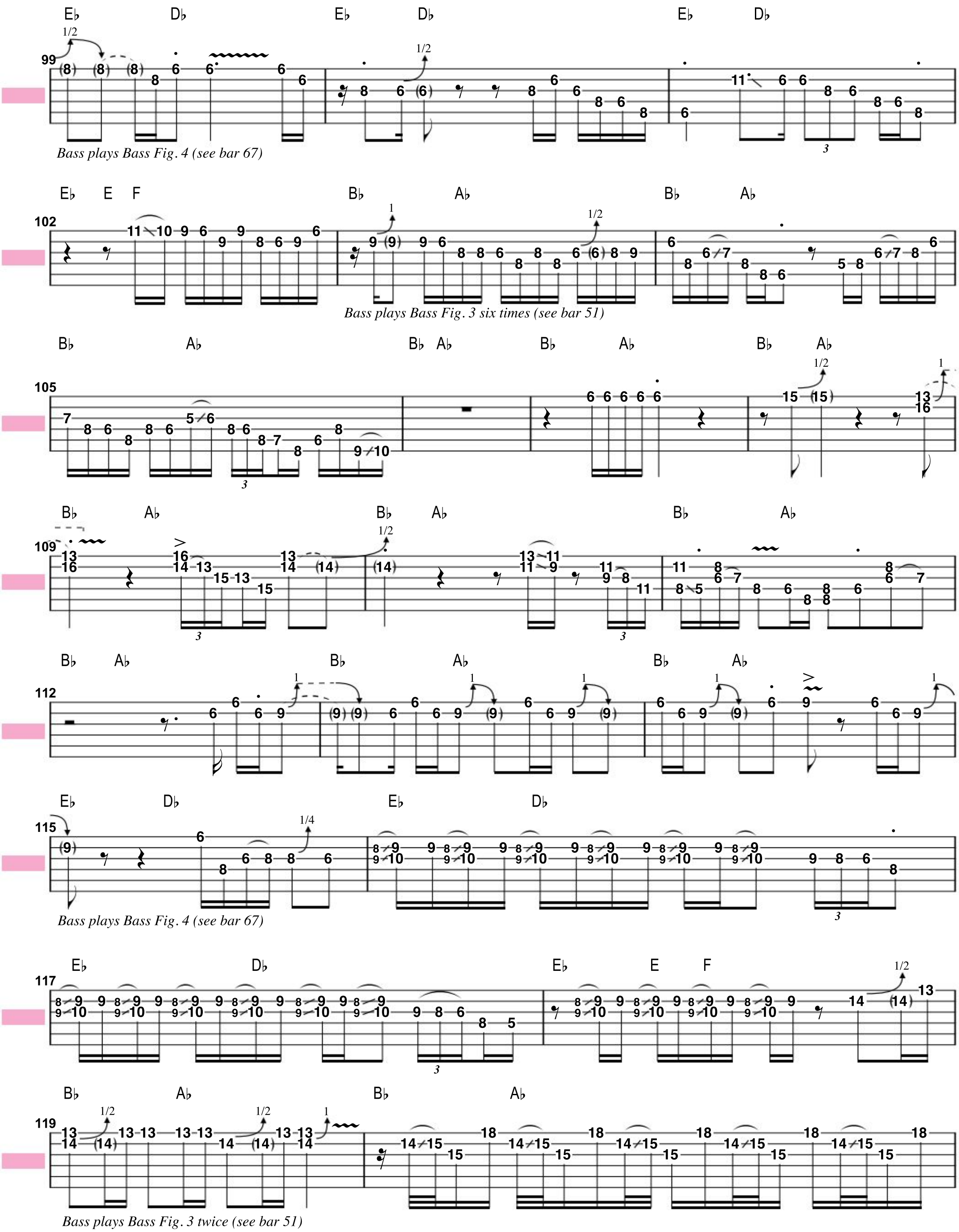
*CD counter times in brackets correspond to the shorter, edited version of the recording that was released as a single and played on radio.

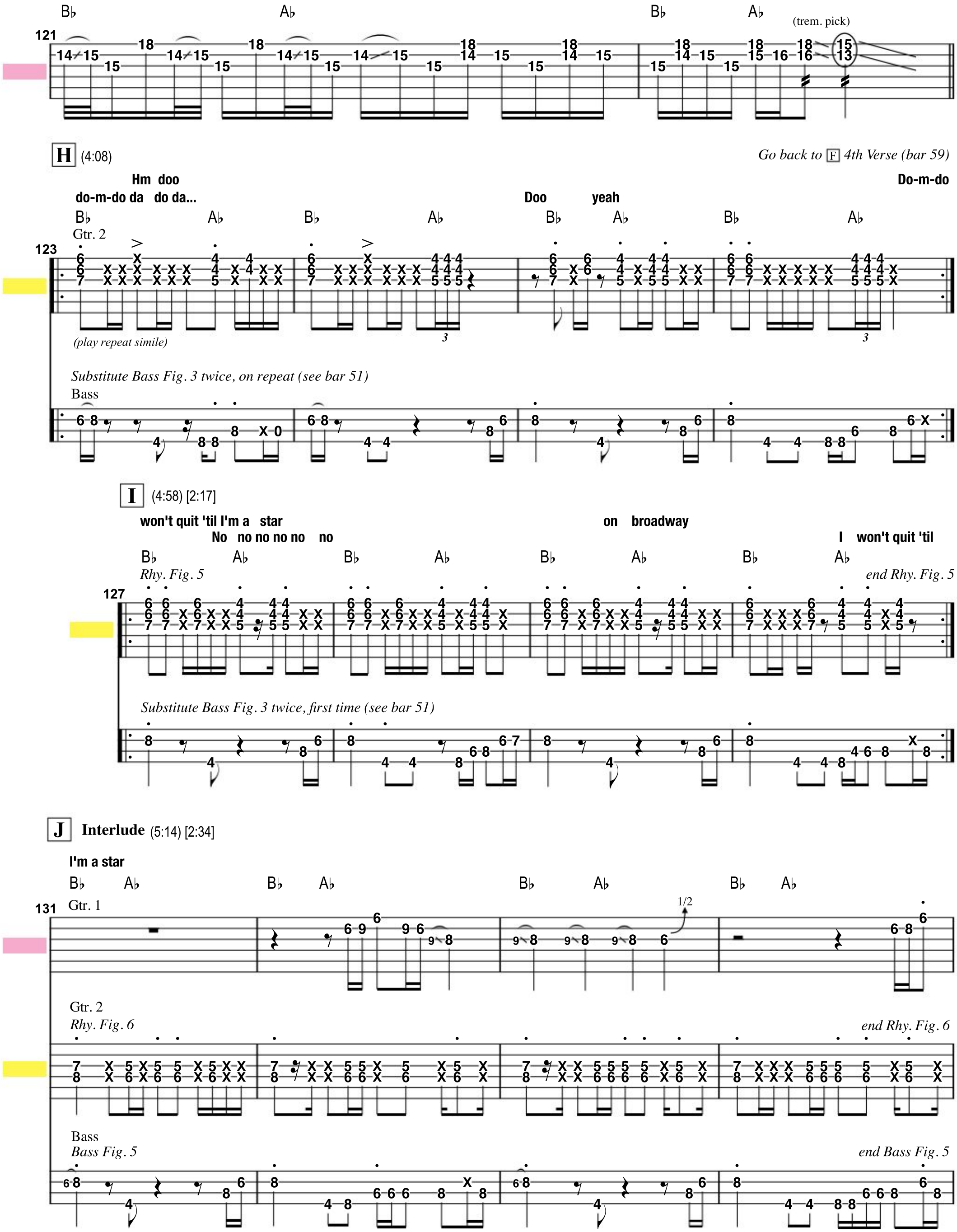

*A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭
Gtr. 2 (w/wah pedal)
*Chord symbols reflect overall harmony throughout.
A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭
B 1st Verse (0:27) [0:15]
They say the neon lights are bright on broadway
A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭
Rhy. Fig. 1
end Rhy. Fig. 1
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 3)
They say there's always magic in the air
A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 15)
Bass
But when you're walking down that street and you ain't had enough to eat
D♭ B D♭ B D♭ B D♭ D E♭
Gtr. 2
Bass
The glitter rubs right off and you're nowhere
A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭ A♭ G♭


C (1:00) [0:48]
Mm ooh hoo mm hoo
A G A G A G A G
Bass Fig. 2
D 2nd Verse (1:08) [0:56]
They say the women treat you fine on broadway
A G A G A G A G
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 2
end Rhy. Fig. 2
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see bar 31)
But looking at them just gives me the blues
A G A G A G A G
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 35)
Bass
'Cause how you gonna make some time when all you got is one thin dime
D C D C D C D D♯ E
Gtr. 2
Bass
And one thin dime won't even shine your shoes
A G A G A G A G
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 35)
Bass

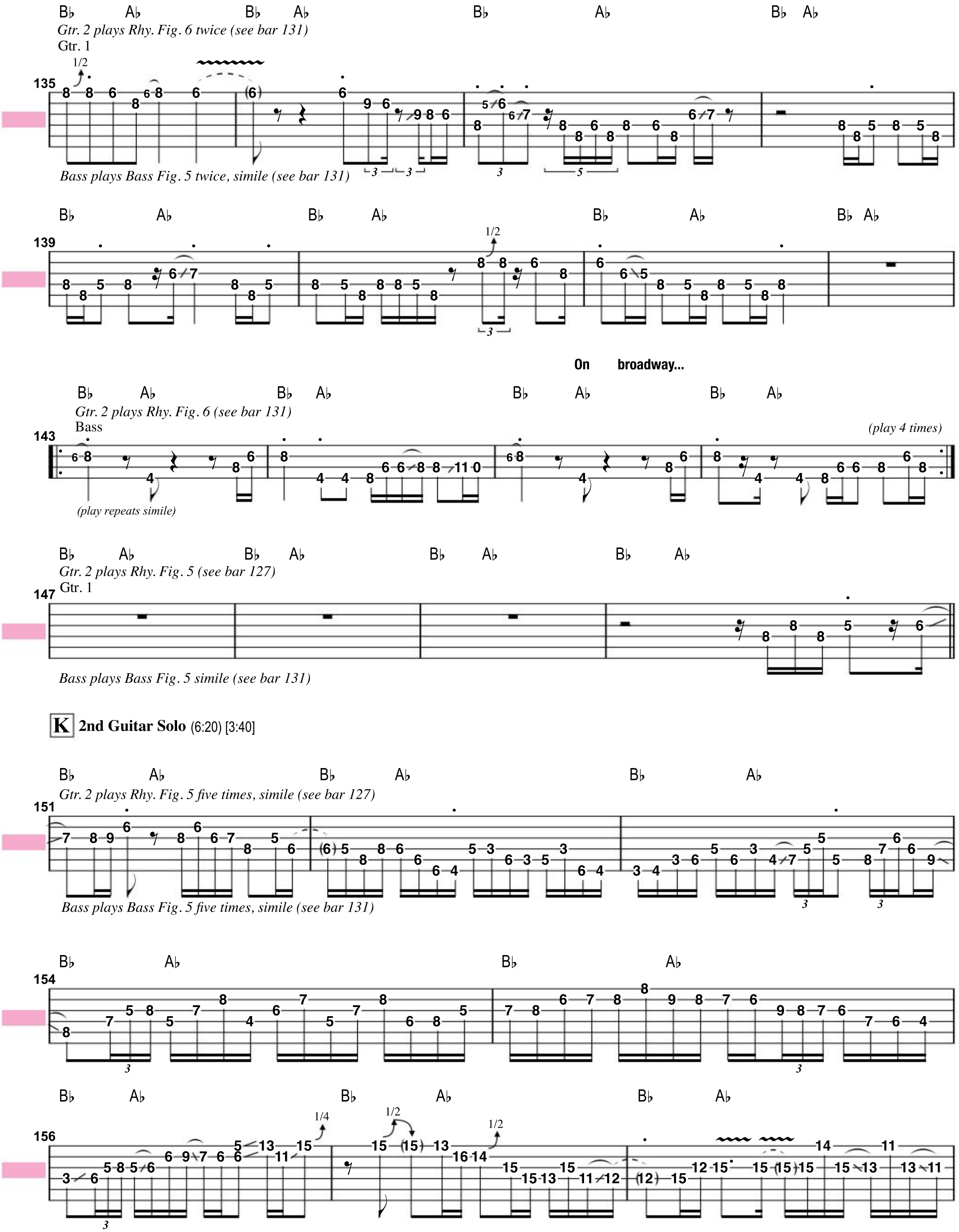

E (1:40) [1:28]
Doo
Doo do doo do doo do do doo
Mmm
B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
Gtr. 2
Bass
Bass Fig. 3
B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 3
(repeat previous two bars)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 51)
F 3rd and 4th Verses (1:57, 4:25) [1:45]
3. They say that I won't last too long on broadway
4. They say that I won't last too long on broadway
B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
Rhy. Fig. 4
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 51)
I'll catch a Greyhound bus for home they all say
I'll catch a bus for home that's what they all say
B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
Gtr. 2
Bass
But they're dead wrong I know they are 'cause I can play this here guitar
E♭ D♭ E♭ D♭ E♭ D♭ E♭ E F
Bass Fig. 4
end Bass Fig. 4


2nd time, skip ahead to 1 (bar 127)
And I won't quit 'til I'm a star on broadway
2nd time:
Gtr. 2
end Rhy. Fig. 4
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 51)
G 1st Guitar Solo (2:29)
Do dum do da do do do m do doo Mm do do do do do do do... (cont. ad lib scat w/guitar notes throughout solo)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 three times, simile (see bar 59)
Gtr. 1
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 four times (see bar 67)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 (see bar 67)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 six times (see bar 51)

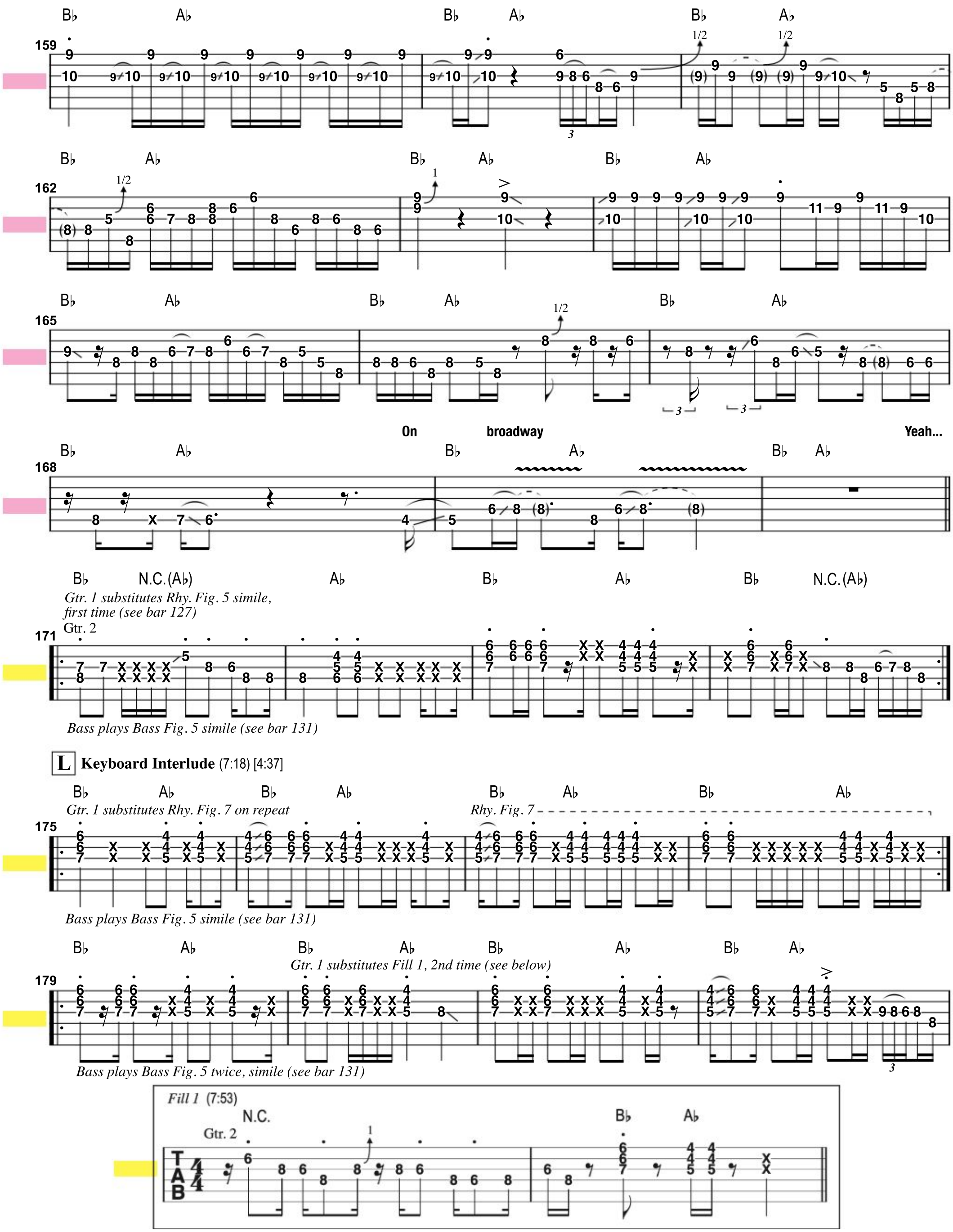

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 (see bar 67)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 six times (see bar 51)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 (see bar 67)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 51)

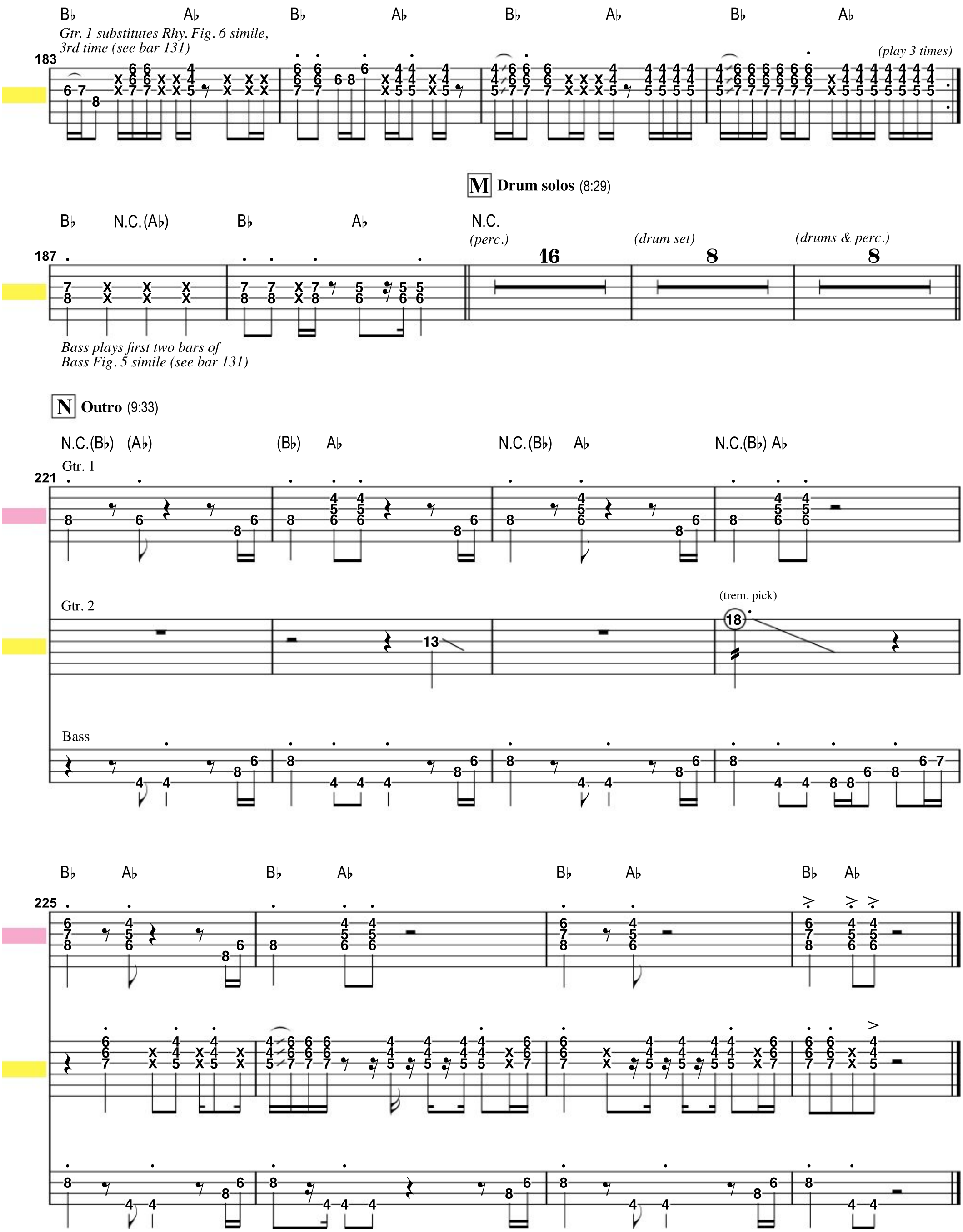


B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
(trem. pick)
H (4:08)
Go back to F 4th Verse (bar 59)
Hm doo
do-m-do da do da...
Doo yeah
Do-m-do
Gtr. 2
(play repeat simile)
Substitute Bass Fig. 3 twice, on repeat (see bar 51)
Bass
I (4:58) [2:17]
won't quit 'til I'm a star
No no no no no no
on broadway
I won't quit 'til
Rhy. Fig. 5
end Rhy. Fig. 5
Substitute Bass Fig. 3 twice, first time (see bar 51)
J Interlude (5:14) [2:34]
I'm a star
Gtr. 1
1/2
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 6
end Rhy. Fig. 6
Bass
Bass Fig. 5
end Bass Fig. 5



Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 6 twice (see bar 131)
Gtr. 1
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 twice, simile (see bar 131)
On broadway...
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 6 (see bar 131)
Bass
(play 4 times)
(play repeats simile)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 5 (see bar 127)
Gtr. 1
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see bar 131)
K 2nd Guitar Solo (6:20) [3:40]
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 5 five times, simile (see bar 127)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 five times, simile (see bar 131)


On
broadway
Yeah...
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 5 simile,
first time (see bar 127)
Gtr. 2
N.C. (A♭)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see bar 131)
L Keyboard Interlude (7:18) [4:37]
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 7 on repeat
Rhy. Fig. 7
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see bar 131)
Gtr. 1 substitutes Fill 1, 2nd time (see below)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 twice, simile (see bar 131)
Fill 1 (7:53)
N.C.
Gtr. 2


B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fig. 6 simile, 3rd time (see bar 131)
(play 3 times)
183
M Drum solos (8:29)
B♭ N.C.(A♭) B♭ A♭ N.C.
187
(perc.) 16
(drum set) 8
(drums & perc.) 8
Bass plays first two bars of Bass Fig. 5 simile (see bar 131)
N Outro (9:33)
N.C.(B♭) (A♭) (B♭) A♭ N.C.(B♭) A♭ N.C.(B♭) A♭
221
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
(trem. pick)
Bass
B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭ B♭ A♭
225

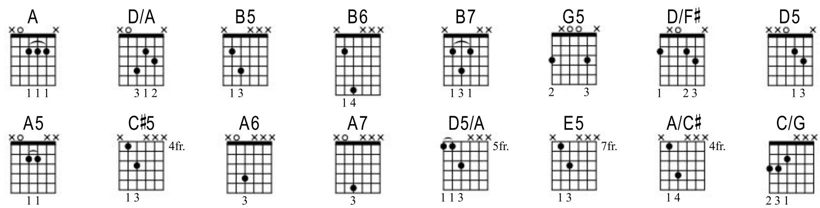
“ROLLING 7s”

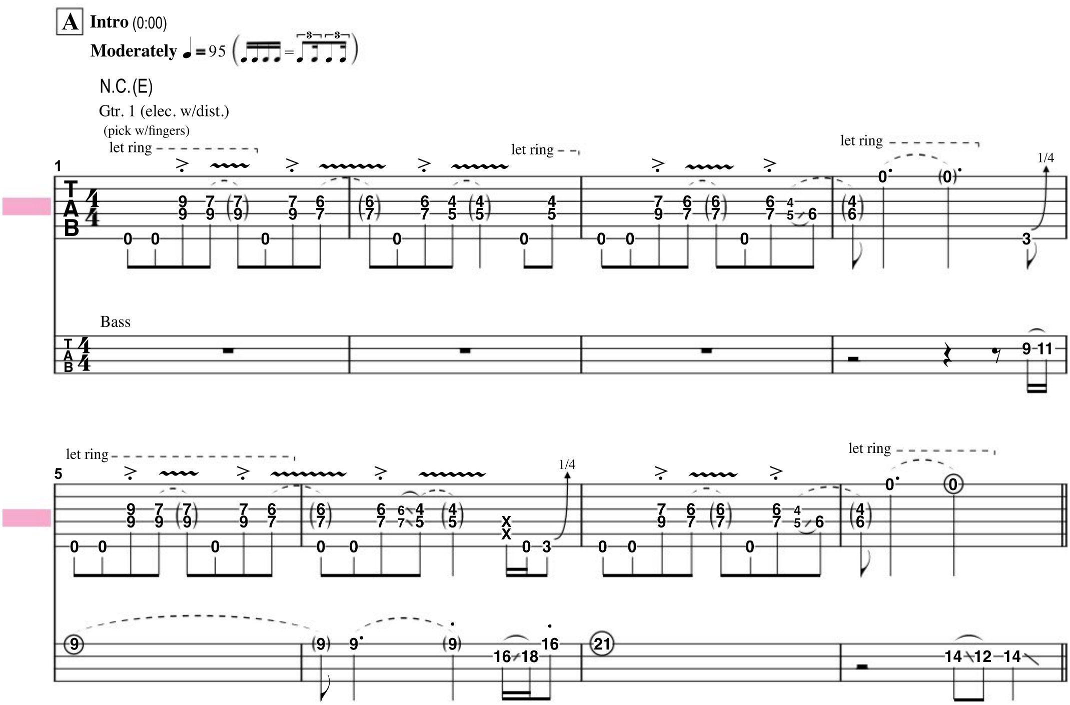
Dirty Honey

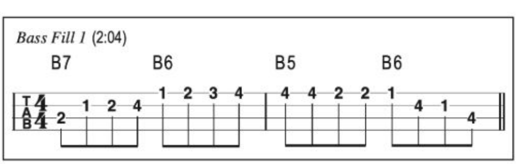
As heard on **DIRTY HONEY**

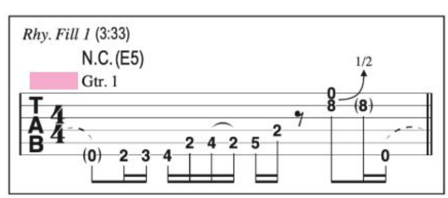
Words and Music by COREY COVERSTONE, MARC LABELLE, JOHN NOTTO, JUSTIN SMOLIAN, BERNARD FANNING *and* NICHOLAS DIDIA
Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN

All guitars are tuned down one half step (low to high: E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭).
Bass tuning (low to high): E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭.

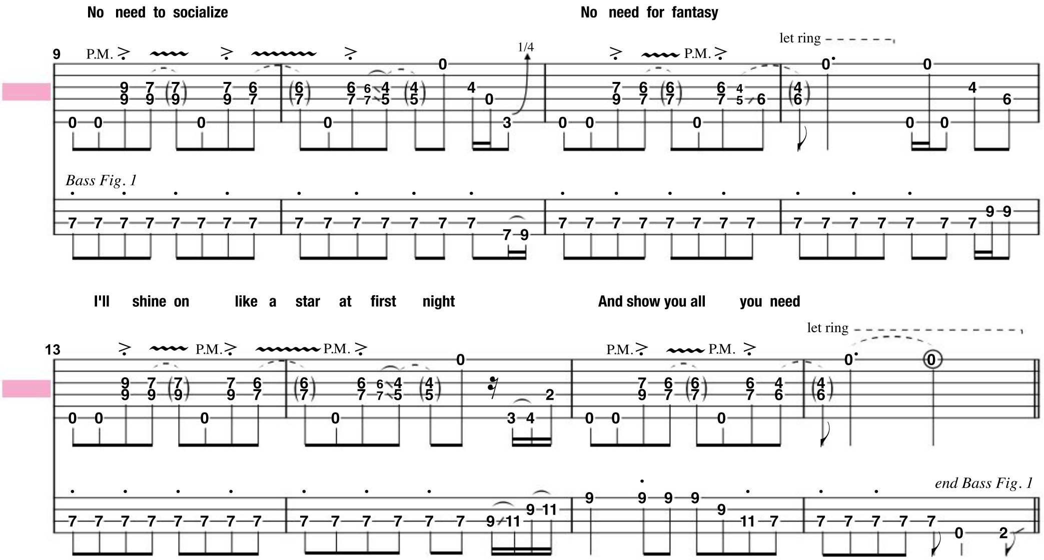




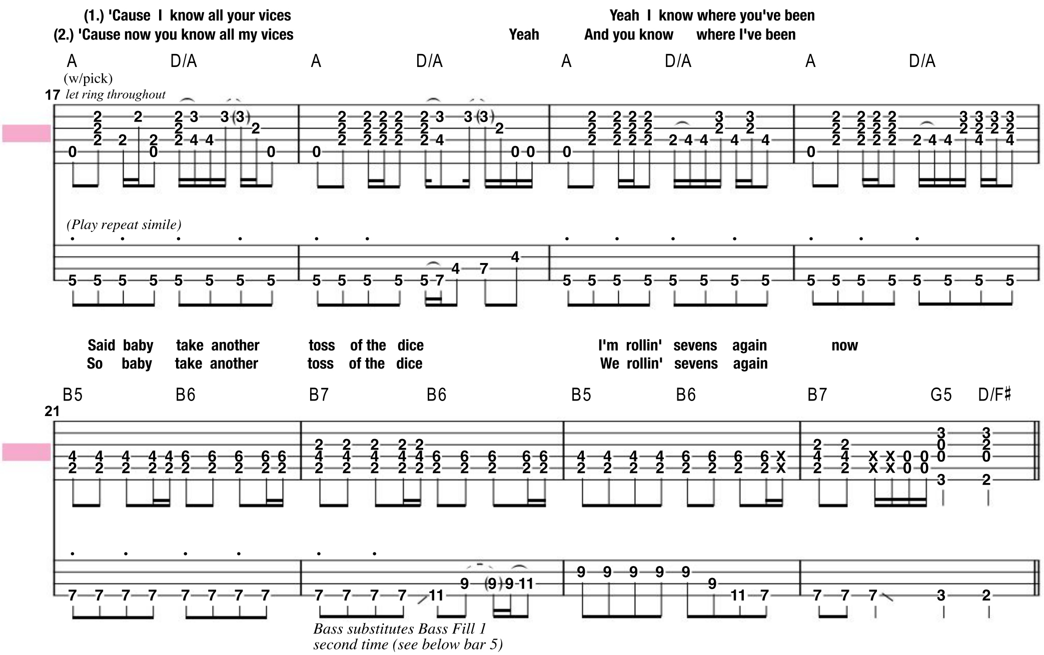




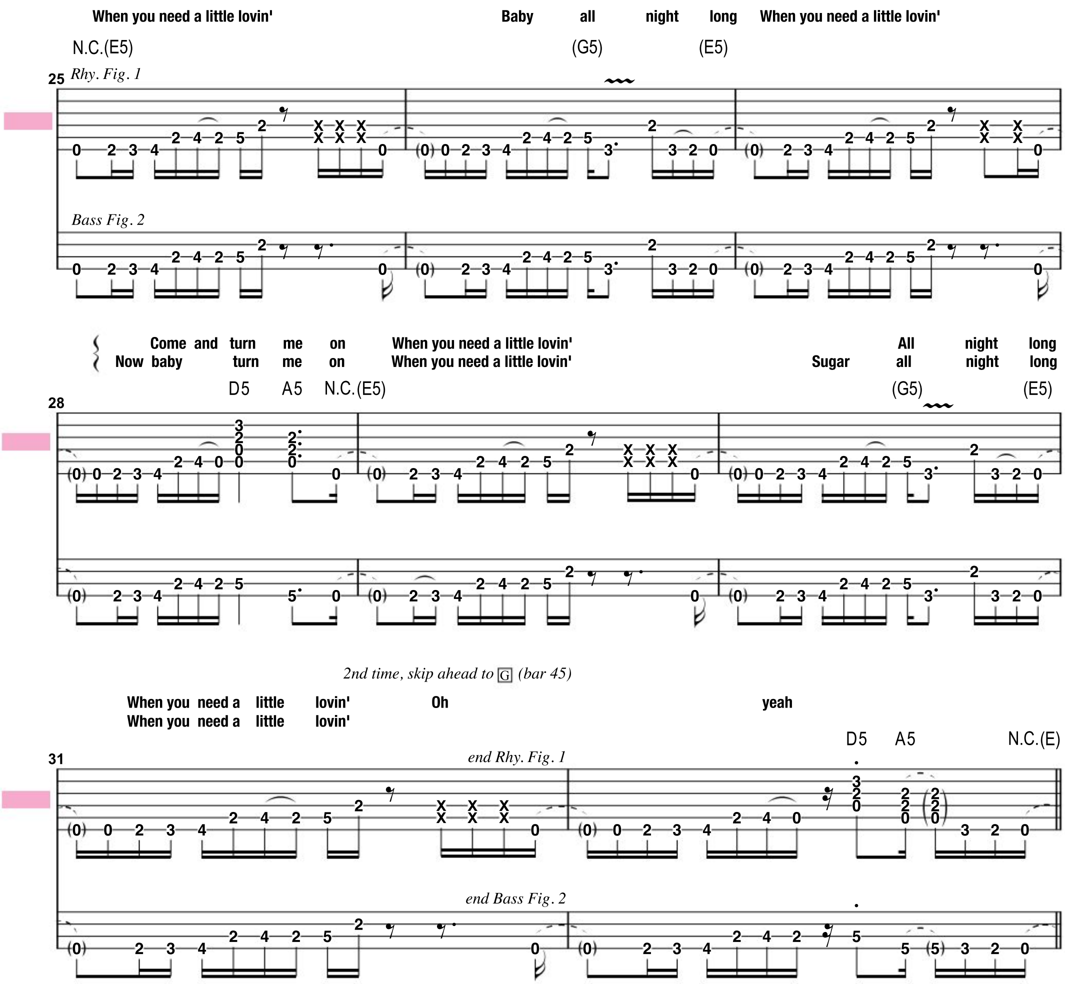
B **1st Verse** (0:21)



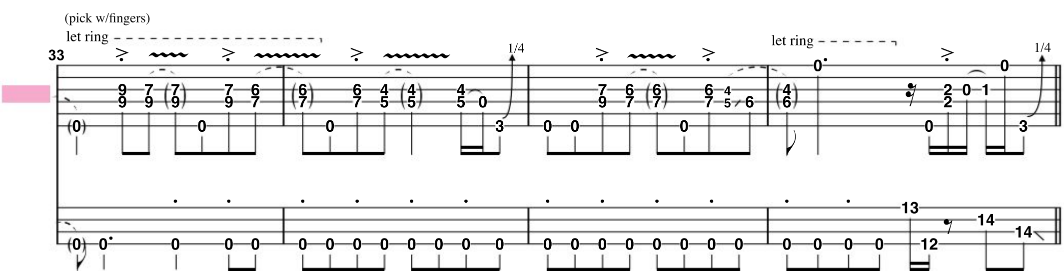
C **1st and 2nd Pre-chorus** (0:41, 1:52)

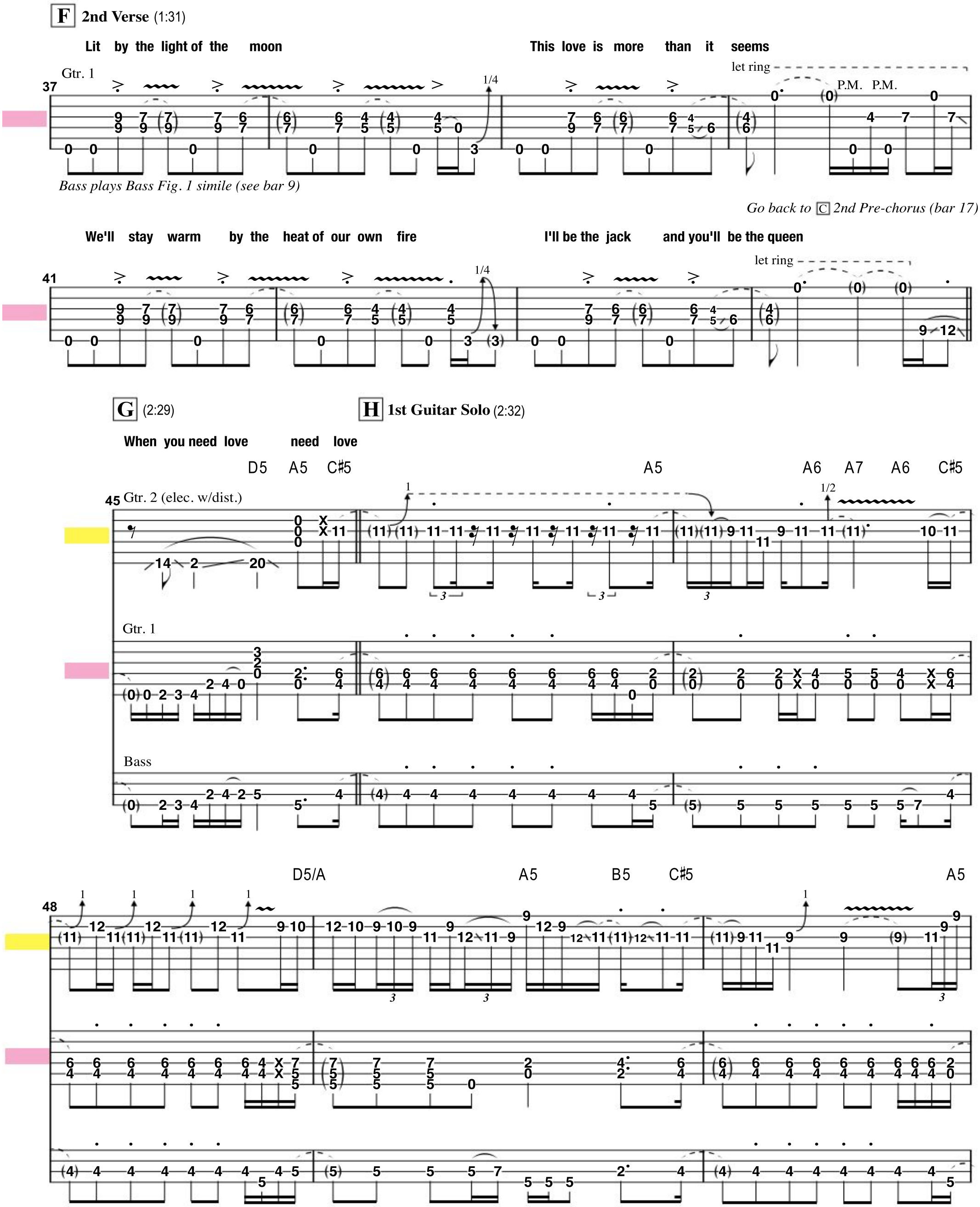


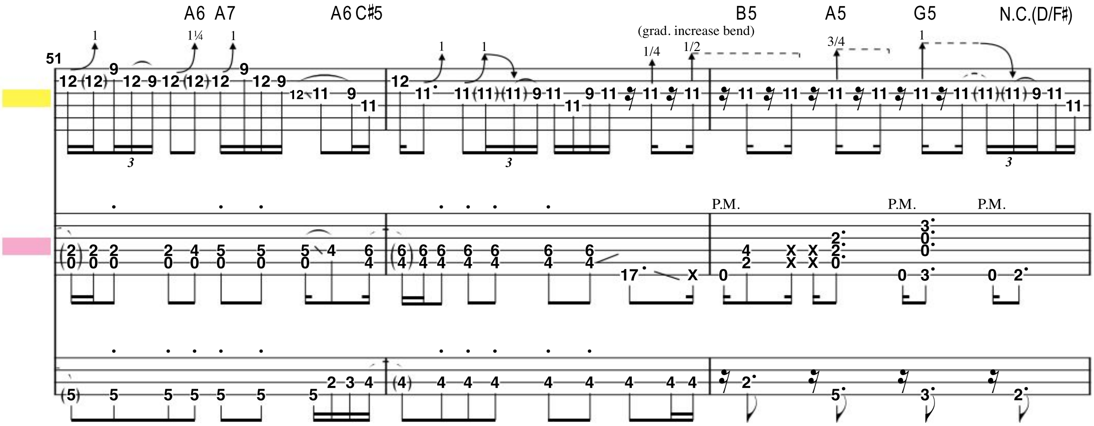
D 1st and 2nd Chorus (1:01, 2:12)



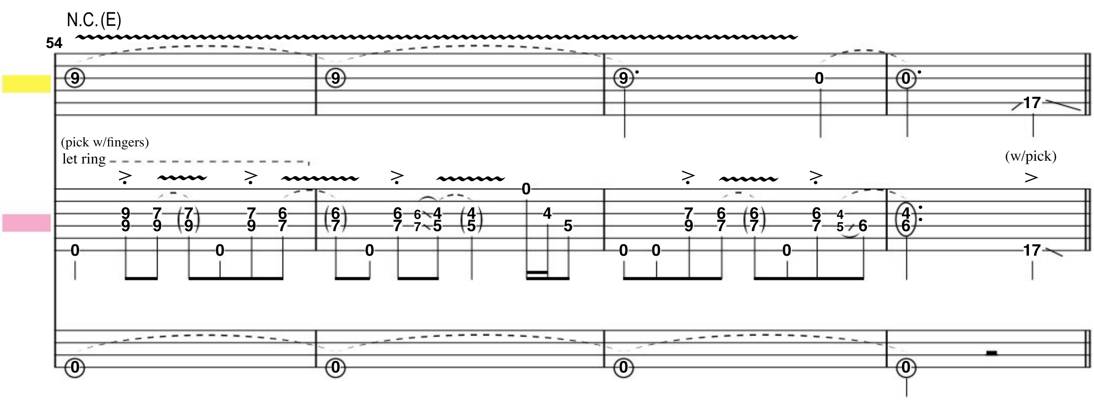
E (1:21)



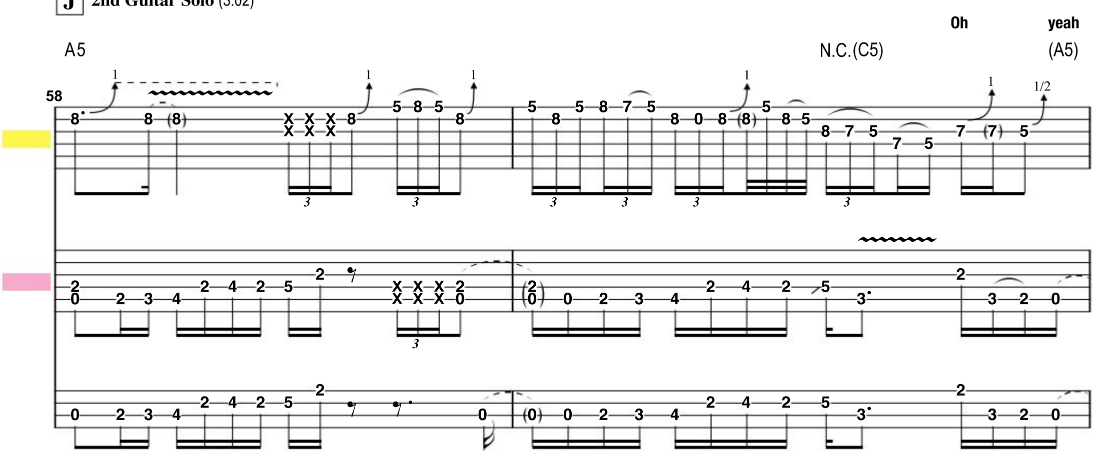

F 2nd Verse (1:31)
Lit by the light of the moon
This love is more than it seems
Gtr. 1
let ring
P.M. P.M.
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 simile (see bar 9)
Go back to C 2nd Pre-chorus (bar 17)
We'll stay warm by the heat of our own fire
I'll be the jack and you'll be the queen
let ring
G (2:29)
H 1st Guitar Solo (2:32)
When you need love need love
D5 A5 C#5 A5 A6 A7 A6 C#5
Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)
Gtr. 1
Bass
D5/A A5 B5 C#5 A5

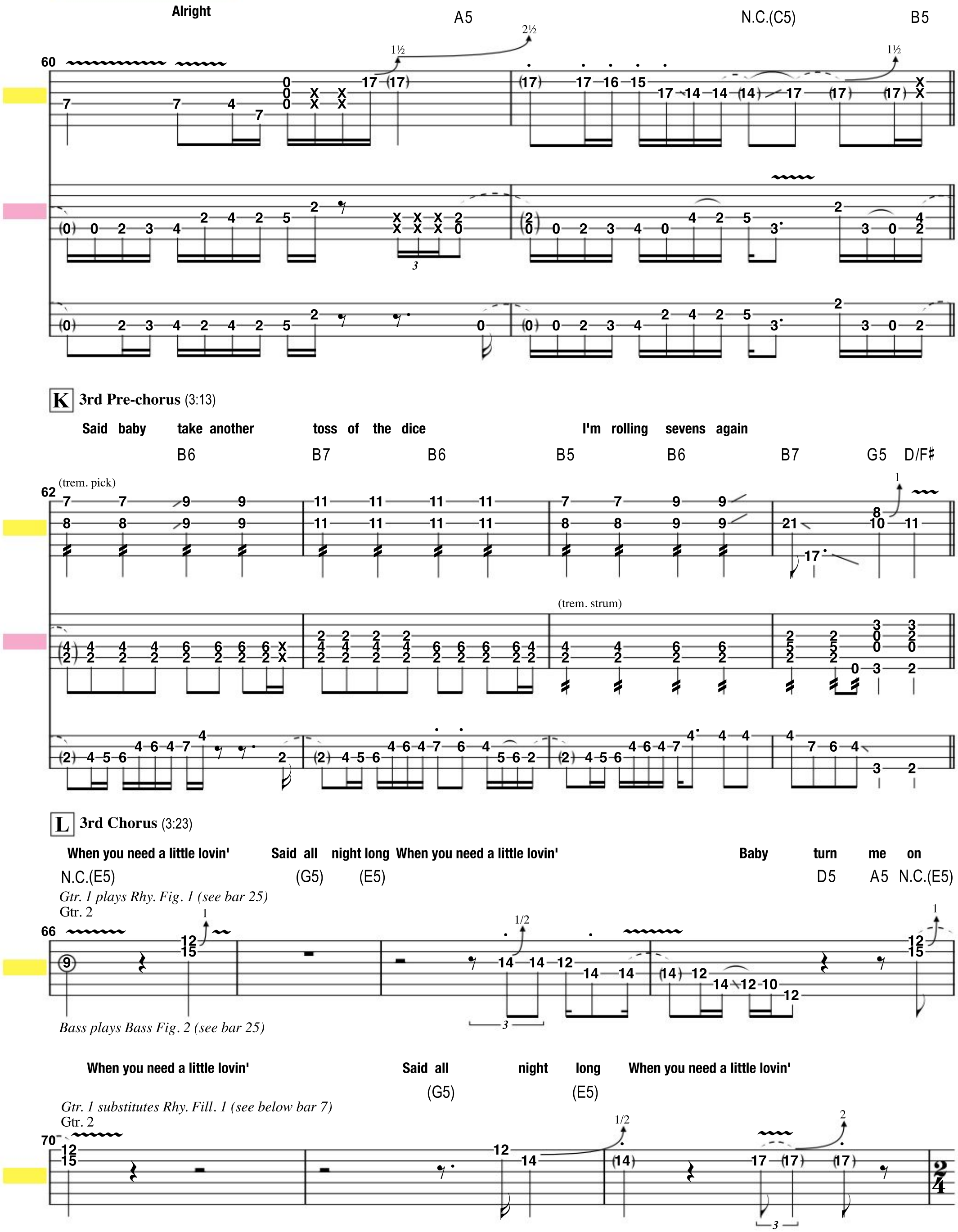


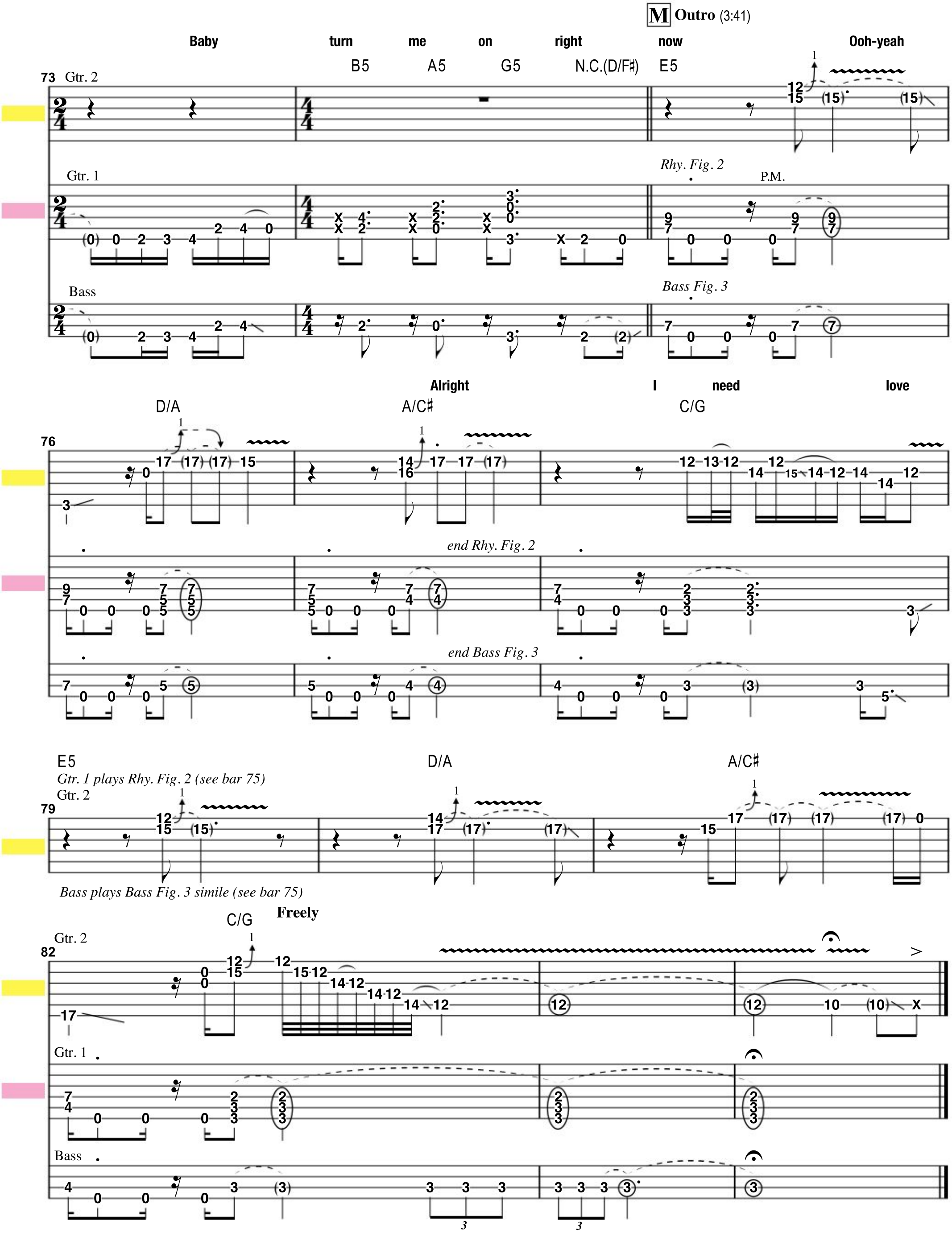
I (2:52)



J **2nd Guitar Solo** (3:02)




Alright
A5
N.C.(C5)
B5
K 3rd Pre-chorus (3:13)
Said baby take another toss of the dice I'm rolling sevens again
B6 B7 B6 B5 B6 B7 G5 D/F#
(trem. pick)
(trem. strum)
L 3rd Chorus (3:23)
When you need a little lovin' Said all night long When you need a little lovin' Baby turn me on
N.C.(E5) (G5) (E5) D5 A5 N.C.(E5)
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 25)
Gtr. 2
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 25)
When you need a little lovin' Said all night long When you need a little lovin'
(G5) (E5)
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill. 1 (see below bar 7)
Gtr. 2


M Outro (3:41)
Baby turn me on right now Ooh-yeah
B5 A5 G5 N.C.(D/F♯) E5
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
Rhy. Fig. 2
P.M.
Bass
Bass Fig. 3
Alright I need love
D/A A/C♯ C/G
end Rhy. Fig. 2
end Bass Fig. 3
E5 D/A A/C♯
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 75)
Gtr. 2
Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 simile (see bar 75)
Freely
C/G
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
Bass

"LONGVIEW"

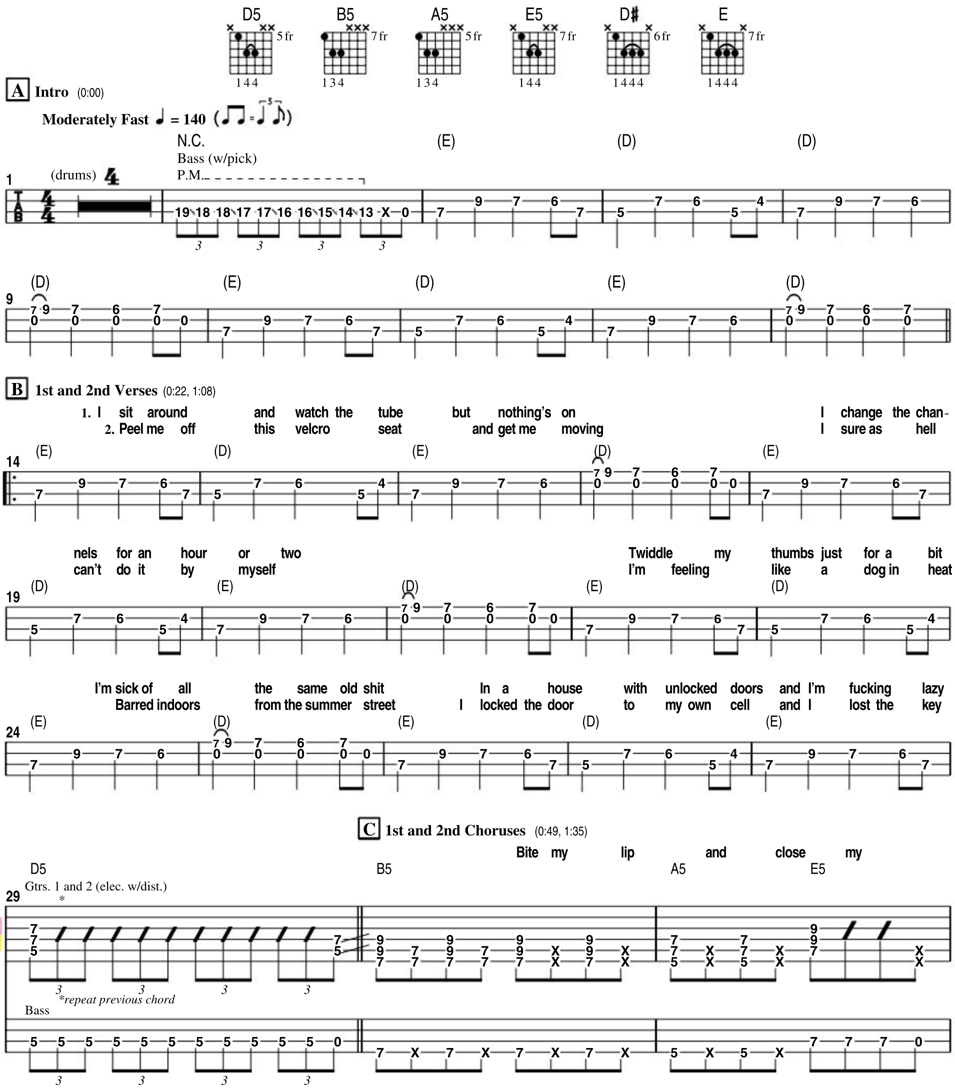
Green Day

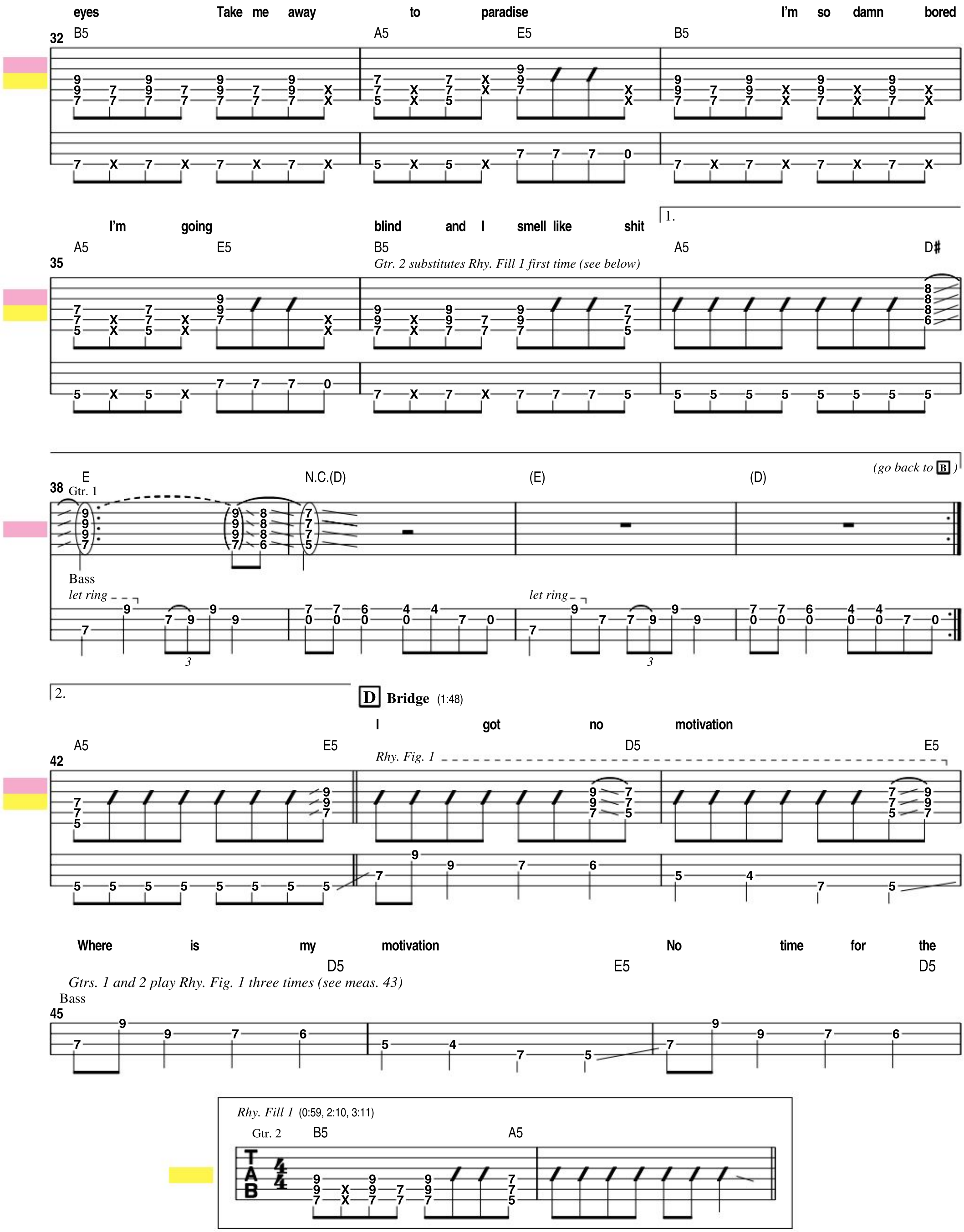
As heard on **DOOKIE**
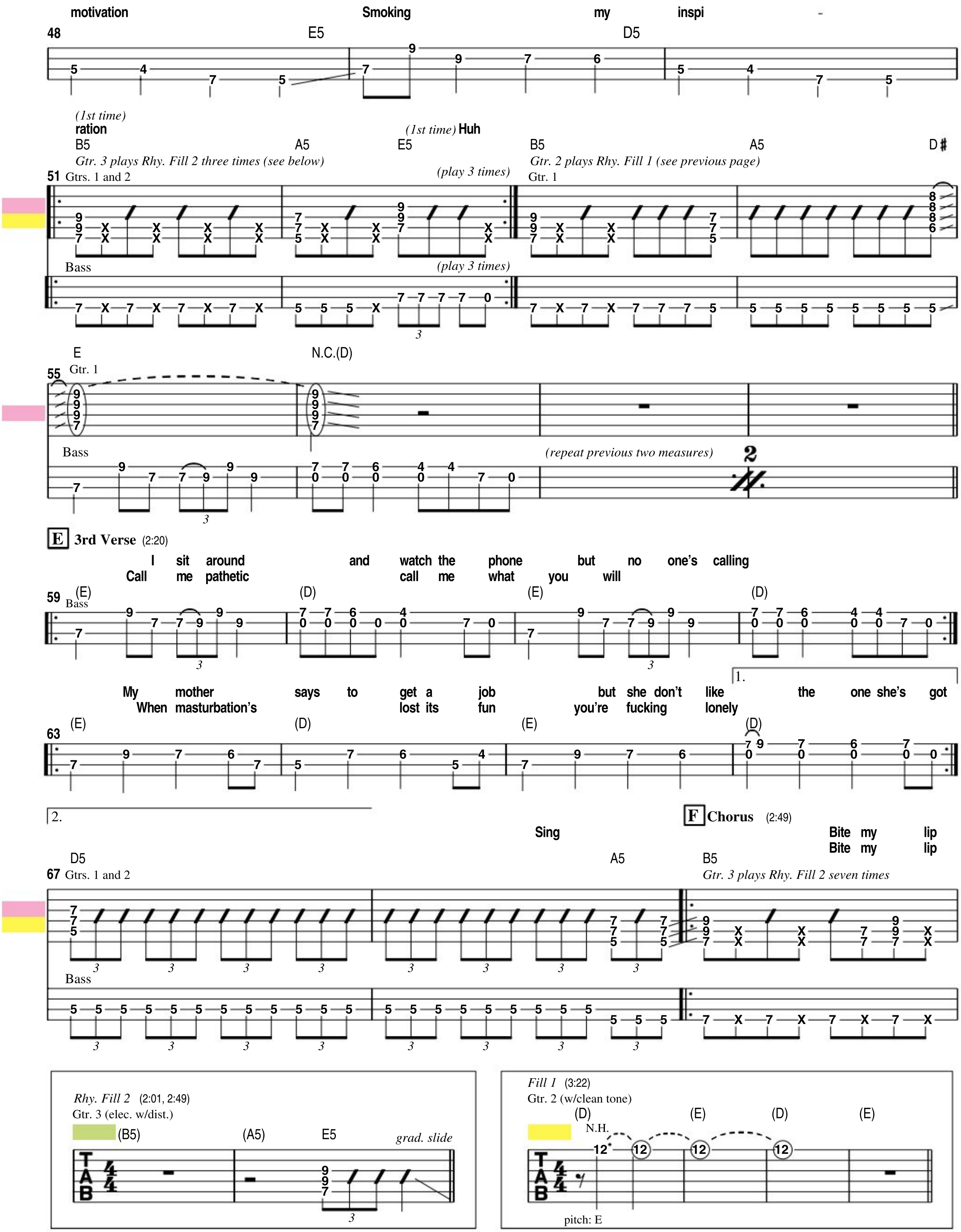
Words by BILLIE JOE • *Music by* GREEN DAY
Transcribed by JEFF PERRIN *and* MICHAEL DuCLOS

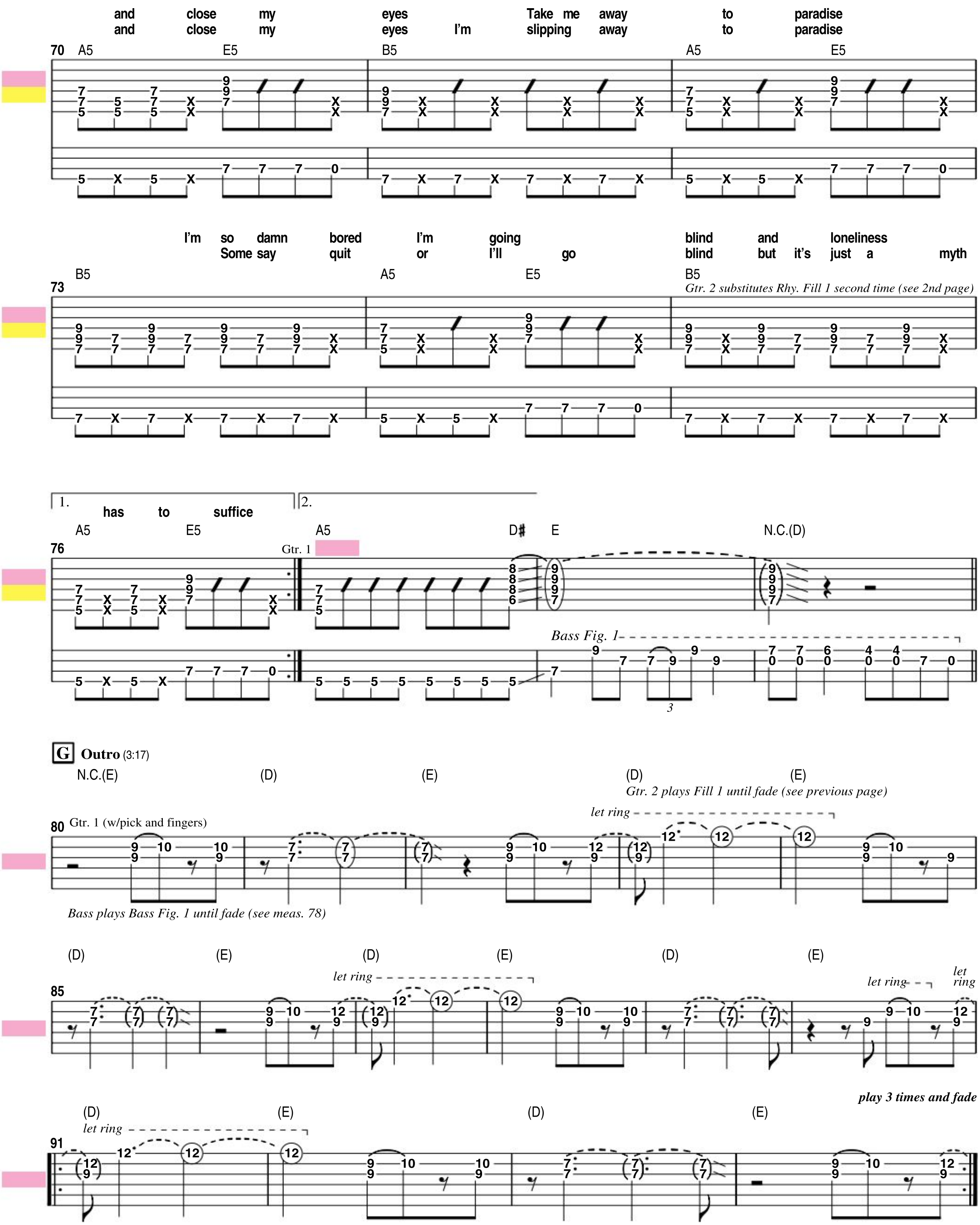
All guitars are tuned down one half step (low to high: E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).
Bass tuning (low to high): E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭.

All notes and chords sound one half step lower than written (key of E♭).




eyes Take me away to paradise I'm so damn bored
B5 A5 E5 B5
I'm going blind and I smell like shit
A5 E5 B5 A5 D#
Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 first time (see below)
1.
E N.C.(D) (E) (D)
Gtr. 1
(go back to B)
Bass
let ring
2.
D Bridge (1:48)
I got no motivation
A5 E5 D5 E5
Rhy. Fig. 1
Where is my motivation No time for the
D5 E5 D5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 three times (see meas. 43)
Bass
Rhy. Fill 1 (0:59, 2:10, 3:11)
Gtr. 2 B5 A5

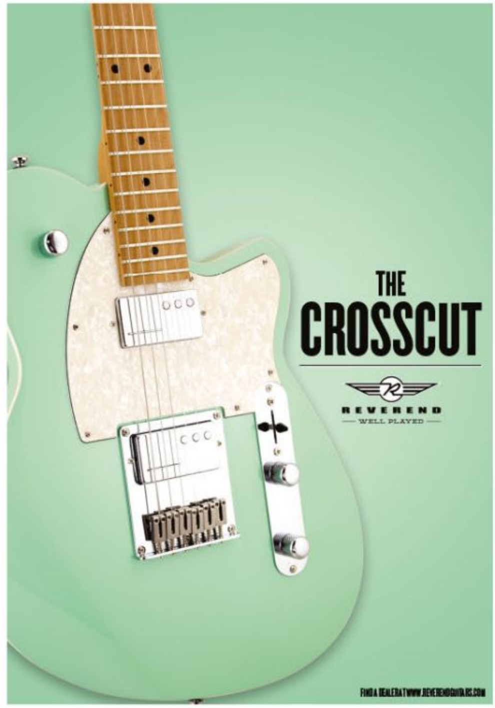

motivation Smoking my inspi -
(1st time) ration
(1st time) Huh
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fill 2 three times (see below)
Gtrs. 1 and 2
(play 3 times)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1 (see previous page)
Gtr. 1
Bass
N.C.(D)
(repeat previous two measures)
E 3rd Verse (2:20)
I sit around and watch the phone but no one's calling
Call me pathetic call me what you will
My mother says to get a job but she don't like the one she's got
When masturbation's lost its fun you're fucking lonely
F Chorus (2:49)
Sing
Bite my lip
Bite my lip
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fill 2 seven times
Rhy. Fill 2 (2:01, 2:49)
Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)
grad. slide
Fill 1 (3:22)
Gtr. 2 (w/clean tone)
N.H.
pitch: E


and close my eyes Take me away to paradise
and close my eyes I'm slipping away to paradise
A5 E5 B5 A5 E5
I'm so damn bored I'm going blind and loneliness
Some say quit or I'll go blind but it's just a myth
B5 A5 E5 B5
Gtr. 2 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 second time (see 2nd page)
1. has to suffice
2.
A5 E5 A5 D♯ E N.C.(D)
Gtr. 1
Bass Fig. 1
G Outro (3:17)
N.C.(E) (D) (E) (D) (E)
Gtr. 2 plays Fill 1 until fade (see previous page)
let ring
Gtr. 1 (w/pick and fingers)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 until fade (see meas. 78)
(D) (E) (D) (E) (D) (E)
let ring
play 3 times and fade
(D) (E) (D) (E)
let ring


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"ALONG FOR THE RIDE"

STEVE LUKATHER | *I FOUND THE SUN AGAIN, 2021* | GUITARIST: STEVE LUKATHER | STORY BY CHRIS GILL

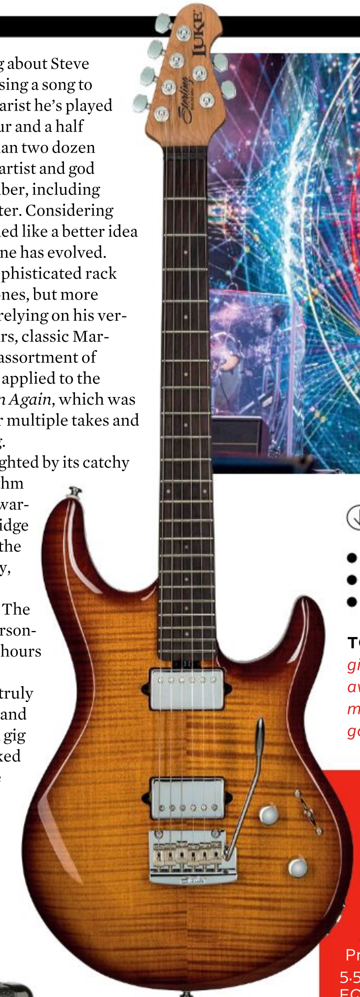


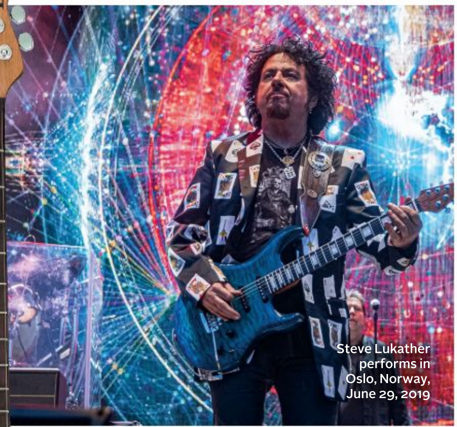
THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE of writing about Steve Lukather for this column was choosing a song to examine. As a first-call session guitarist he's played on hundreds of hits over the last four and a half decades, and he's recorded more than two dozen albums with Toto, about a dozen albums as a solo artist and god knows how many projects as a primary band member, including collaborations with Larry Carlton and Edgar Winter. Considering Lukather's massive amount of experience, it seemed like a better idea to look at his most recent work to learn how his tone has evolved.

Until a few years ago, Luke used to rely on a sophisticated rack setup to access a wide variety of studio-quality tones, but more recently he's adopted a much simpler approach, relying on his versatile Ernie Ball Music Man Luke signature guitars, classic Marshall-style Bogner Helios 100 half-stacks and an assortment of stomp boxes. The "keep it simple" approach also applied to the recording of his latest solo album, *I Found the Sun Again*, which was recorded live in the studio without click tracks or multiple takes and with only minimal overdubs and post-processing.

"Along for the Ride" kicks off the album, highlighted by its catchy melodic riff and gorgeously gritty overdriven rhythm guitar tones. Luke generated the riff's distinctive warble by striking the base of his Luke III's vibrato bridge with his palm. His guitar's tone during the solo at the end of the song is as good as it gets, with thick body, smooth sustain and percussive punch courtesy of boost from his signature ToneConcepts Distillery The Luke pedal and dynamic expression that oozes personality, which only comes from tens of thousands of hours working the fretboard.

According to Lukather, the latter is the key to truly great guitar tone, and gear is just the mechanism and foundation to present that. "Once after I played a gig with Larry Carlton," he illustrates, "this guy walked up to Larry and said, 'That guitar you played sure sounded great tonight.' Larry then pointed to the guitar on the stage and answered, 'Oh yeah. And how does that guitar sound now?' " [*Laughs*] It's a great lesson — the player matters more than the instrument, and one should obsess less about gear and more about developing one's touch, expression, phrasing and nuance in the quest to achieve great tone.





Steve Lukather performs in Oslo, Norway, June 29, 2019

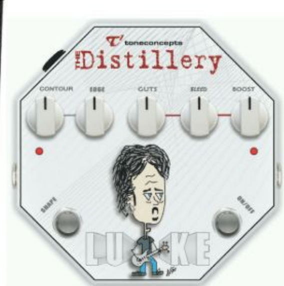
PER OLE HAGEN/REDFERNS

GET THE SOUND, CHEAP!

- Sterling by Music Man Luke
- Marshall DSL20CR
- ToneConcepts Distillery The Luke

TONE TIP: *Luke's tone settings tend to give most frequencies equal weight, so avoid the temptation to boost just the mids or highs. Do, however, feel free to go heavy on the gain.*





ORIGINAL GEAR

GUITAR: Ernie Ball Music Man Luke III Maple Top HSS (Bridge humbucker), Volume: 10, Tone: 10

AMP: Bogner Helios 100 (Hot input, Presence: 4, Bass: 5, Mid: 5.5, Treble: 5.5, Volume II: 3, Gain II: 9, Volume I: 3, EQ: In, 70/80: 80, CH1 Bright: Normal, Channel 1/2: 2, Pre EQ: Normal, Bottom: 3, Punch switch: On, JMP100/JTM30 switch: 100) with Bogner 4x12 with Celestion Vintage 30 speakers

EFFECTS: ToneConcepts Distillery The Luke (Contour: 0, Edge: 3, Guts: 6, Bleed: 10, Boost: 3) (solo only)

STRINGS/TUNING: Ernie Ball Paradigm .009-.042/Standard

PICK: Ernie Ball small teardrop (358 Shape) cellulose shell Heavy

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